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Biblical Pedagogy

*A Handbook for Sunday School
Teachers and Bible Students*

by

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Preface

This little book has been written with the conviction that the results of our Sunday school or Bible school work have not been what they ought to be. It is not written in the spirit of criticism, but with the purpose of suggesting some ways in which improvements may be made. Its object is to encourage the school idea in our Sunday school work and to establish this work on a firm and distinct educational foundation. The Author believes that religious education involves the same psychological principles as does secular education and that in all respects it should conform to the laws of modern pedagogy. The Bible school worker, no less than the day school worker, has need of studying the best methods of instruction and proceeding in his work according to the nature and needs of the learner's mind. Religion is fundamentally an education, and therefore the promoter of a healthy, fruitful, and deeply spiritual type of religion should seek to carry on his work on the basis of sound educational principles.

In the hope that this little handbook may be an aid in the accomplishment of its purpose and may bear some precious fruit in the Master's service, it is hereby commended to the prayerful consideration of the Church in general and of all the Bible school workers in particular.

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CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

Pedagogy is that branch of the science of education which deals with the principles and practice of teaching and of learning. Teaching and learning are correlative terms, the one implies and supplements the other. There is no teaching without the presence of a learner, and learning in the ordinary use of the word implies the presence and function of a teacher. Teaching is both a science and an art. As a science it posits certain principles and laws according to which its processes are conceived and carried on. Likewise learning, on the other hand, involves certain psychological principles without which it cannot proceed successfully. Pedagogy as a science seeks to coördinate these two basic factors of education and thus build up a philosophy of teaching and learning. In no other branch of education is this needed as much as in religious education. For a long time religious education was carried on in a random fashion, and the results have been unsatisfactory and disappointing. The Bible school teacher to-day, quite as much as the day

school teacher, feels the need of scientific methods and of a practical philosophy of teaching.

Pedagogy rests on a psychological basis. It builds its rules, its precepts, its methods, upon the rational nature of mind. The last word, the omega, of psychology is but the alpha of pedagogy. Psychology was present at the birth of modern pedagogy in 1824, when Herbart wrote his "Psychology as a Science." In our day the question of teaching and learning is in the practical stage; it is reducing its theories to practice. Psychology is making most valuable contributions to pedagogy, it is in fact reconstructing pedagogy on a truly scientific basis. It gives the teacher knowledge of his field and of his subject. It reveals the foundations of the school curriculum. It is the only safe guide in arranging a rational course of studies, in articulating one subject with another so that the child can easily grasp the meaning and the unity of the things he is taught. It shows the stages of the learner's mental development and thus enables the teacher to understand what the learner needs at each step in the course. It aids the teacher to differentiate his individual pupils so that he can adapt his instruction to their individual requirements. In the average Bible school class there is a variety of mental types, there are great differences between boys and girls, and these differences must be appreciated in order to make the instruction effective. Here a knowledge

of psychology is of great practical value and is exceedingly helpful. The teacher must know the general laws of mind, because he has to deal with mind; he can not get away from this; he must know these laws; he cannot afford to stumble in the dark. The seriousness of his business requires the highest intelligence concerning the nature and operations of the learner's mind. Psychology describes *how* the mind learns. This the teacher must know in order that he may assist the pupil in the development of his mental powers. A serious understanding of mental functions is a great help in educational work. Psychology has much the same relation to teaching as physiology has to the profession of medicine.

The laws of mind furnish pedagogy with its governing principles. No principle or method or precept of pedagogy is valid unless it rests on the nature of mind. The science of education is concerned, not so much with *grown* mind, as with *growing* mind. The teacher most of all needs to know the *growing* mind of his pupil, the mind that is just unfolding its powers, its capacities, its aptitudes, the mind that is just blossoming out for a destiny beyond the stars. No one is fit to teach, that is, to mould such a mind in the direction of its destiny, either in the secular school, and much less in the Bible school, who does not understand the nature and functioning of the mind. The intelli-

gent Bible teacher, who is truly master of his subject, knows how the mind works in forming its percepts of things presented to the bodily senses, how it shapes these percepts into concepts or ideas, and how it assimilates all these into a unified, systematic, coherent body of knowledge. He knows how the mind grows in comprehension and strength and ability to learn, and how he may be of the greatest service to the pupils entrusted to his care. The more he knows about the powers of the mind and their mode of operation, the greater will be his efficiency and the better will he be able to fulfil the solemn and responsible duties of his office.

Pedagogy is occupied with mental attitudes—an attitude on the part of the teacher of hearty personal participation in the exercises of the hour, of loving sympathy with the difficulties, trials, discouragements of his pupils, of intelligent helpfulness and earnest solicitude for the intellectual and spiritual welfare of the class. A teacher with such an attitude toward his work will be successful, even if his intellectual and technical equipment is not of the highest type. The first great requisite of a good teacher is that he be possessed of the right spirit, the spirit expressed in Chaucer's famous line, "And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach."

Attitude is everything in practical pedagogy. If the teacher's attitude is of the right sort, he will find ways and means of securing the right attitude

of the learner, for the old saying, "Like priest, like people," holds true here also. The work of instruction cannot proceed successfully unless the pupil is brought into a right relation to the subject in hand. Teaching is mind acting on mind, and learning is mind reacting on mental stimuli. On the part of the learner there must be an attitude of reverent attention and of hearty personal response to the efforts of the teacher. When these reciprocal attitudes are properly coördinated the business of instruction proceeds normally, and the maximum of success and happiness results. Then learning is not an irksome task but an exhilarating pleasure, and teaching is a joy.

Is there a distinctive Sacred pedagogy?

There are two answers to this question. So far as general principles and methods are concerned, secular and sacred pedagogy are the same. So far as subject matter, points of personal appeal, and spiritual application are concerned, they are different, and this difference is great enough to warrant separate treatment. Secular pedagogy is sufficiently treated in the standard text-books on the subject and needs nothing further in this connection. But little has been written about sacred or biblical pedagogy. Hitherto very little attention has been given to the subject of Bible teaching as an art and a science in itself. It was supposed that any one who knew the Scriptures and was in sympathy with their

teachings was qualified to fill the office of Sunday school or Bible school teacher, that matters of method, grading, order of studies, supervision and the like had little to do with Bible school teaching. We are just now awaking to the seriousness of this error, and beginning to inquire what we must do to improve our Sunday school work. A person may know the Scriptures, be pious, devout, and all that, and still be a poor Sunday school teacher, because he lacks the necessary technical training. On the other hand, a person may be a successful secular school teacher, and be a failure as a Bible teacher, because he is not familiar with certain things which distinctively belong to the business of Bible instruction. Bible teaching is different from other teaching in certain particulars, and these particulars give it a place of its own in the science of education. What are some of these particulars?

First and foremost, the Bible teacher is an interpreter of the Word of God. This implies a personal relation to the subject matter of instruction far more intimate and responsible than is ever attained or thought of in teaching the various subjects of secular knowledge. The Bible teacher is the mouthpiece of God through whom a Divine message of inestimable importance is communicated to men, and he is conscious of this function. Hence, like his Master, he speaks with authority, and not as the scribes and Pharisees. An element of au-

thority and power characterizes his style of utterance which is not found in ordinary speech. Moreover, the truths which he teaches others he has himself experienced and therefore he has a personal apprehension of them far deeper than is possible with regard to secular knowledge. Divine knowledge carries with it moral imperatives which compel the recipient to assume an attitude of obedience. "Thus saith the Lord" makes obligatory upon the hearer a voluntary response, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." There are no such imperatives inhering in secular knowledge. A knowledge of geography does not carry with it an obligation to subordinate one's life to the will of God, but the knowledge that Jesus Christ died to save men from their sins at once demands a personal surrender of one's personality to Christ and compels his loyalty to Him. In the nature of things it is inevitable that these characteristics of the Bible teacher's office and subject matter translate themselves into methods and ways of proceeding quite different from those of ordinary secular teachers and make the foundation of a distinct sacred pedagogy. The outward mode and manner are the expression of the inner conception and realization of the truths he deals with.

Again, the personal appeal which the Bible teacher is supposed to make to the pupil's emotional and volitional powers with a view to decisive ac-

tion, is of such a nature as to call for specialized ways of dealing with his subject. In a matter of such serious importance not any random way of presentation will do. He cannot afford to experiment; he must be sure that his method is right and founded on sound principles and that it will accomplish the end in view. While the conversion of the pupil is not his primary aim, it is still true that his work will fail of the greatest value if he does not manage to press the truths of the lesson home so as to bring about conviction and decision in regard to the pupil's relation to God and his Saviour. The teacher must remember that he is dealing with souls whose destiny for weal or woe may be hanging in a trembling balance. A single unwise remark, a doubtful illustration, an undue dogmatic manner may cause that soul to swing in the direction of perdition, while a right and sympathetic appeal may set his feet on the highway to glory. "The whole sky of divine truth bends over that lesson period; God and the angels are interested in it." If it is true, as Victor Hugo has said, that "not a hawthorne blooms, but is felt at the stars"; in a far higher sense it is true that not a lesson on the way of salvation is taught but it thrills to the hearts of the Saviour and the company of the redeemed. For such delicate and responsible work the highest skill and tact and judgment are required. Here is need of an art of teaching which far transcends the

best pedagogy of secular education. The art of making an effective appeal on the basis of a lesson well taught, an appeal that shall rouse the slumbering moral and spiritual forces of the learner's nature and call forth from him a hearty response, is the finest of all the fine arts. If there should arise a truly wise teacher of teachers who has the rare art of explaining how this art is to be attained, he would do a service to Christian education of incalculable value, that would fill the earth with the knowledge of the Most High and make glad the city of our God.

The principles on which Biblical pedagogy rests, in the main, are similar to those of general pedagogy, but they go far deeper, they lie closer to the boundaries of ultimate grounds. To understand these fully is itself a gift of inspiration. As the Word of God is given by inspiration of the Spirit, so the ability to interpret the Word comes by inspiration. Only spirit can know spirit and the things of the spirit. The laws which govern biblical interpretation are spiritual in their nature. They are continuous with the pedagogical laws that reign in the natural realm, but when they enter the spiritual realm they assume new aspects different from those that obtain in the field of natural knowledge. The apostle Paul speaks of things which "are spiritually discerned." This utterance implies a mode of knowing which, though it employs

the natural faculties of the soul so far as their sphere of action extends, brings into view higher powers of discernment, namely, spiritual discernment. Whatever else spiritual discernment may mean as distinguished from ordinary discernment, it certainly implies a higher and a finer mode of knowing or learning than anything which natural psychology or pedagogy acquaints us with. Biblical pedagogy is concerned with these higher and deeper principles of learning and teaching, and so is distinctive from secular pedagogy. The discussions in the subsequent chapters of this little book are a fuller answer to the question whether there is a distinctive Biblical or Sacred pedagogy.

There are a few terms of frequent occurrence which need a word of explanation. *A principle* in pedagogy is a fundamental truth which is to serve as a basis of method in the teaching and learning art. Pedagogical principles are formulated from what we know of the human mind and of the fund of truth with which humanity is to be educated.

A Method in pedagogy is a rational plan or a series of steps for effecting the results of teaching. In Kant's phraseology, "Method is procedure according to principles," method is some particular way of reaching a given end by a series of acts which tend to secure that end. Method implies, first, a conscious purpose or end to be accomplished ;

secondly, a thorough, sympathetic study of the pupil with respect to his needs and requirements; thirdly, a knowledge of the subject to be taught; fourthly, a judicious application of ways and means to the circumstances of the case.

A pedagogical device is a contrivance for applying a certain method to a particular case. It shows the teacher's ingenuity or inventive skill and his resourcefulness in dealing with particular problems and with individual pupils.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIBLE SCHOOL TEACHER'S CONCEPTION OF HIS OFFICE.

The degree of success the teacher achieves depends largely upon the conception he has of his office. The stream does not rise higher than its fountain. He will put energy, intelligence, and consecration into his work in proportion to what he thinks of it. If he has a right view of his office he will assume an attitude toward it that will put him at his ease and will enable him to use his resources to the best advantage. It is of utmost importance that he feels perfectly comfortable in his position, so that the objective reality of his work shall be completely in accord with his subjective state of mind.

In the first place, he should conceive of his office as one of *teaching* and not of *preaching*. Teaching and preaching are two widely different functions; it is one thing to teach, and another thing to preach. It seems so hard to get away from the idea that the Sunday school or Bible school is a kind of primary or children's church. This erroneous notion is largely responsible for the lack of satisfactory re-

sults of Sunday school work. The Sunday school is, in fact, no church at all; it is simply a *school*, as the name denotes. It is quite distinct from every other branch of church service. It is the school department of the Church. It is distinctively a *school*, and the school idea must determine its organization, its administration, and its methods of work. The true function of the Bible school is to do the work of a school. And by school we mean all that is meant by the word in its general acceptance, namely, a place, an organization, an agency for the instruction and training of children and youth in the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

The Sunday school, also called "Bible School," "Church School," and "School of Religion," is essentially an American institution whose purpose is to instill religious truth into the mind of childhood and youth. Bible School teaching is not a substitute for religious teaching in the home, but a supplement to it. The home teaches religion incidentally and in a general way, while the Sunday school makes that its specific office. Its aim is primarily educational, that is, the development of the child's religious nature by bringing to bear on it the truths of the sacred Scriptures. We need to keep this idea clearly in mind that the Sunday school is really a *school* and must always function simply as a *school*. The sooner we adjust ourselves to this primary and

distinctive educational aim the better will it be for that religious education which it is the duty of the Church to provide for its children and youth.

Not only this, but the educational function of the Sunday school is vitally important in our day as a means of fostering the intellectual element in religion. There is a danger of religion deteriorating into mere sentiment. We look to the school to counteract this tendency and to build up the intellectual side of religion by applying school ideas and school methods to the work of religious training. The days when everything religious was looked upon as miraculous and had to be received on faith alone, is past. That is not the temper and point of view of present-day youth. Religious education must keep pace with the developing thought of the age. As the young advance in general knowledge and learn that religious phenomena are effects with causes that may be inquired into and understood, like any other class of phenomena, they come to feel that there must be a reason for the faith that is in them; they look upon religious phenomena as capable, to a considerable extent, of analysis and explanation by the application of scientific tests and principles. This demand on the part of unfolding youth carries with it unlimited possibilities for good in the way of establishing definite religious ideas upon a sure, rational foundation. This the Bible school, by keeping before it the educational idea, is calculated

to accomplish, and so it proves itself an institution of inconceivably great importance to the rising generation.

The Bible school may have other aims and offices to fulfil, such as the homiletical, the evangelistic, etc., but these must be considered secondary and subordinate. The school is not a place for sermonettes nor for revivalistic campaigns; the Bible school teacher is not a preacher nor a revivalist nor an expounder of a system of ethics; he is just a common teacher, and the Bible school is just a school and must keep true to its educational aim.

To fulfil this constructive educational aim, the Bible school, as we know it to-day, is sorely in need of certain vital improvements in its system of work. There is need of a positive school pedagogy, founded on modern scientific and psychological principles. One of these principles is the recognition of the fact that the child may have a genuine religious experience of his own, which is not imparted to him from without by miraculous means or agencies, but which is to be developed within him, and which is to grow in strength and assurance as the ordinary intellectual life grows by exercise. This idea comes into consciousness by keeping steadfastly to the educational aim of the Bible school. Another need is that of rational grading according to the psychological principle of apperception. The grading of pupils should be according to the stage of their individual

religious development, and not according to age or size. The more the school idea prevails, the more imperative will become this kind of grading. Closely connected with this is the need of a rational order of studies, based on the nature of Bible truth and on the capacity of the pupil to assimilate biblical truth. The studies should be arranged in pedagogical order; for example, the earlier parts of the Old Testament for the child, the prophecies and the gospels for youth, and the epistles of Paul for maturity. On this subject more will be said elsewhere. Another need is sufficient time. Half an hour on Sunday is not enough. In so short a period very little can be accomplished. The period of instruction should be lengthened. A portion of each day should be given to it. If this is not found practicable, at least one hour each Saturday forenoon should be devoted to Bible study.

All these needs and many more will be met when the school idea of the Sunday school is more fully recognized and when the educational aim of Sunday school instruction dominates the organization of the school. Once the needs are felt, a way will be found to meet them; once the true function of the Bible school is understood, the things necessary for its welfare will be forthcoming. If the teacher understands his office he will not be satisfied until a way is found by which he will be able to achieve

the end and purpose of the institution to which he has consecrated his talents.

The office of the Bible school teacher is to teach youth the saving truths of evangelical Christianity. His first duty is to teach the children and youth the Word of God, and to build up in their minds a coherent, systematic body of knowledge about the facts and doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is his textbook. In no other subject of study is there to be found such a textbook. Stanley Hall calls it "a pedagogical masterpiece." And such it truly is for several reasons. It makes prominent the principle of man's growth from childhood to old age. The Bible grows as the child grows; it has something suitable for every stage of growth, even as Jesus Himself said, "First the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear." It answers every test and conforms to every demand of modern pedagogy for development. This wonderful textbook does not exploit any particular theory of religious life; it deals with the reality of spiritual life and with experience; it is religion expressing itself in prophecies and psalms, gospels and epistles, chronicles and revelation, parables and miracles, conversations and sermons. Whatever the particular subject treated, it has the touch of life at every point and calls forth a response wherever it comes in contact with the soul of man. The Bible was not made by a pedagogical specialist to serve as a hand-

book of the science and art of teaching; it was made as a plant is made, by a process of growth, taking form in the act of expressing its vital principle. In the words of another, "The Bible speaks on religion with ages of truth-seeking behind it. Centuries of struggle after God are here uttering their secrets." Being given by inspiration of God, it is a perfect guide to the development of spiritual life. Its inspirational quality is everywhere present and constitutes the ground of its supreme authority in all matters of doctrine and religious life. Stanley Hall says, "It is our great good fortune to live in an age when our Bible is being slowly revealed as the best utterance and reflex of the nature and needs of the soul of man, as his great textbook in psychology, dealing with him as a whole body, mind, heart, and will, and all in the largest and deepest relation to nature and to his fellow-man, which has been so misunderstood because it was so deeply divine."

But the teacher's responsibility does not stop with teaching the Bible. By means of a knowledge of the truth he will seek to build up in the pupil a godly character and to foster in him a fruitful, healthy spiritual life. The first condition of a true Christian life is to know the truth. With this he starts as a foundation for everything else. We know of no other means of awakening spiritual life in the soul of the learner than the Word of God.

To bring the living word of truth into contact with the soul of the child so that the child shall become rooted and grounded in the truth must ever be the great office and object of the Bible school teacher. The Divine Spirit may act directly on the human spirit to quicken its slumbering powers or otherwise influence it in the working out of its destiny, but that is a psychic mode of operation we know nothing about. The ordinary way is through the objective written or spoken word of truth. The spiritual education of the soul proceeds in the same way and employs the same psychological processes as does its intellectual education. Spiritual education, like every other kind of education, is a process of learning, and all learning implies the use of the mind's perceptive, conceptive and assimilative powers.

The teacher's office is to stimulate, unfold, and direct these powers. In doing this, his main, perhaps, only dependence is upon the objective word of truth. His business is to take the things of Christ, the things spoken and done by Him, His discourses, His parables, His miracles, and show them to the learner to the end that he may believe, and believing, have everlasting life. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Another outstanding feature of the teacher's office is its lofty character. It is no common thing to teach the Word of God and to mould young souls

for an immortal destiny. Of all the callings known to man, there is none higher and nobler and greater and more responsible than the calling of the Bible school teacher. And truly it is meet for him to magnify his office. To preside over the birth and growth of a soul, to point out to it the way of life, to acquaint it with the plan of salvation, to bring about its vital union with Christ, the living vine, and to lead out the sublime possibilities of a young life into happy fruition is indeed a vocation fit for angels, one that calls for the highest powers, the best judgment, the ripest wisdom, and the deepest consecration of the teacher.

Such a view of his office brings inspiration and courage to his heart. Nothing else is so efficacious to keep his courage and efficiency at high potential as looking out betimes upon his field from the inspiration point. There are times when he feels discouraged and seems to get no results from his labors. Be he ever so earnest, there is no response to his efforts. He has happened upon his "Plateau of Despond," and is ready to give up. If then he thinks upon the charge received from the Master, and hears again, ringing in his heart, the Master's words of commission, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations . . . and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," his courage revives, and he gives himself to his task with renewed energy. It is a blessed experience if he can sometimes feel the re-

freshing breezes from the heights blowing down upon him in the midst of the toilsome field. It is a most stimulating thought expressed in the Saviour's words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these the least of mine, ye have done it unto me." Inspiration comes in the consciousness of doing a useful service to the least of mankind in the name of the Master. When the teacher attains such an outlook upon his calling, it loses its commonplaceness and its drudgery and is transformed into something divine. Then he puts, not simply his time and his best efforts, but his very life into his work, so that in it he lives, and moves, and has his being.

Such a conception of his office immediately reflects itself in the fine quality of his work. The finest work a man ever does is that which he performs under the inspiration of divine appointment and with the conviction that in it he is realizing his holiest ideals. When his energies flow out from the springs of his innermost being with the urge of destiny behind them, they spend themselves in works that have upon them the seal of highest excellence. The value of such works is not measured by the amount of physical exertion expended, but by a certain fineness of quality, for the full estimation of which no material standards suffice. He delights in his work because it mirrors to him his true ideal self. His own soul being aglow with emotions of the

true, the good, and the beautiful of the things contained in the lesson, he will transmit the same sentiments to the minds of the pupils. He will not be content to leave any single truth or point in the lesson as a mere fact, but he will seek to transform everything into something beautiful and divinely true, he will seek to link up every fact with the pupil's spiritual welfare.

A lofty conception of the teacher's office begets a love for his office. No one can achieve the highest degree of success in any line of endeavor unless he loves his work. If his heart is not in it, his hands will labor in vain. If he has no heartfelt interest in his work, the energy he spends in it will be of little avail; it will never rise to a high plane of excellence. This is one of the immutable laws of human nature. The grand motive power of all great achievement is love for the things which the hands find to do. If the teacher has no love for his work he is not in his right place and will have little success in it.

CHAPTER III.

THE TEACHER'S RELATION TO THE PUPIL.

The word "teacher" is a relative term. Teacher implies learner. There is no teaching function without the presence of a pupil. There is thus a necessary relation between teacher and pupil; it is furthermore a *correlation*. This aspect of the teaching function is fundamental. All true pedagogical theory takes into consideration, not the teacher in isolation, nor the pupil by himself, but both together in their reciprocal correlation. A thorough study of this subject requires attention to several particulars.

In the first place, the class-room work proceeds on the principle of the group mind. Collective mental action is different from the mental action of an individual when he is by himself. A person does not think the same way in the presence of a company of people as he does when he is alone. A number of people acting together, for example, in the effort to solve some problem, will arrive at conclusions different from those drawn by the same individuals when they think by themselves. The group mind functions differently from the single

mind in isolation. This fact is illustrated by the behavior of mobs. If a crowd of people, acting under the mob spirit, reach a mob conclusion and proceed to carry it into execution by acts of violence, the collective mental operation is widely different from what their mental operation would be if they thought over the case by themselves alone. Hence the first thing to do in dealing with the mob is to disperse the crowd.

This principle of the group mind lies at the foundation of class-room instruction. The teacher has to deal with the group mind; it is seldom that he deals with the individual pupil. The pupils form a class, and the teacher addresses himself to the class as a whole in a collective capacity. The members of the class think collectively. Each one's mental processes are modified by the presence and influence of the others. The teacher's words of explanation, for example, of a given Bible passage, will be differently understood when he gives such explanation before the class from what would be the case if he explained it to each one privately. What goes forth from the teacher's lips will take a different coloring in the minds of the class because of the influence of one upon another in the group. This is perhaps the reason why the Master delivered some of the greatest truths of the Gospel to individuals privately rather than to an assembled congregation. He taught Nicodemus privately the great truth of re-

generation, and the woman of Samaria at the well Sychar, the spirituality of the worship of God. God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Again, classroom work is teaching and learning by contact. It is a give-and-take process. Something goes out from the teacher and is received by the learner, and something goes out from the pupil which has an influence upon the teacher. The influence of contact with a powerful, magnetic personality on the part of the teacher is an educative force of the highest order. From personal contact originate streams of power which are felt in every cell and fiber of one's being; it is the greatest of all character-forming forces. Such influences operate unconsciously, but all the more powerfully for that very reason. When a teacher with a high potential of personal power stands before a class of young people to instruct them in the Word of truth, he is like an overcharged electrical conductor, radiating streams of influence to all within the magnetic field. St. Mark tells us that when the woman with an issue of blood made her way through the throng and touched the hem of the Master's garment, He felt that "virtue had gone out of Him." On other occasions healing virtue went out of Him when He touched those that were diseased. So life-giving virtue goes forth from the teacher to the learner through contact with him. From living

contact with an illuminated spirit in the exercises of the school the pupil gets his best interpretation of the truths learned in the lesson. Only so the truths learned from the textbook become vital and vivifying. Contact means association, and no person can associate with another without being influenced and changed in some way by such association. We unconsciously assimilate the qualities of those with whom we come in contact. By virtue of this principle class instruction acquires a peculiar value. A student, by reading, could study up a subject by himself, but he never gets out of it what he gets when he pursues the subject with a good teacher. The subtlest and finest elements of knowledge are likely to escape him when he works by himself alone. Many a soul owes its rebirth to living intercourse with a teacher of strong character and potent personality. The teacher feels, with his pupils, the higher life into which they are being born under his touch. When pupils work in isolation such an experience is hardly possible. Mr. Garfield's ideal of a college, "Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and an earnest student on the other," illustrates how he estimates the educative value of contact with a master mind. The greatest teachers have been those who understood the stimulating power of their personality upon the students who came in touch with them, those who knew how to ripen the individualities of their students by personal contact.

The relation between teacher and learner should be one of real sympathy. The secret of successful and fruitful teaching is a participating sympathy. Genuine sympathy is one of the most powerful educational forces that can be used in the class room. Sympathy means fellow feeling, an entering into the experiences of the pupil, his difficulties, his trials and discouragements, his joys and griefs, his hopes and fears, his ideals and ambitions, his achievements and disappointments. It weeps with those that weep, and it rejoices with those that do rejoice. The quality of putting himself in the pupil's place and seeing things from his point of view, distinguishes the master from the novice. It is a mark of real fitness for his office when the teacher can graciously descend to the pupil's level and share with him the experiences incident to the pursuit of learning. It is a very common fault that the teacher holds himself in a plane above that of the pupil, and preserves a kind of aloofness from him. He deals with the lesson contents as he sees them; he speaks from his own experience; the result is that his instruction does not touch the life of the pupil and calls forth no response. His ideas and words are foreign, he is a stranger to the pupil, there is no bond of sympathy between them. The kind of sympathy that discovers the pupil's possibilities and aptitudes as well as his trials and difficulties, that knows how and when to speak the seasonable word

of advice and encouragement, and to do the friendly little act of kindness, which is as the refreshing shower to withering vegetation, has made more great men and women in the world and has filled more lives with sweetness and light than stern authority or cold intellectuality.

The relation of teacher to pupil should be characterized by love. To teach pupils well they must be loved much. As sunshine opens the petals of the rosebud and brings forth its beauty and fragrance, so love unfolds the latent powers of the child's soul. Some one has said, "Love a child, and he will reveal himself to you." Love is the never-failing means of getting into the heart of persons and things. There is no greater revealing power than love. The secret forces of mind and heart evermore yield to the magic wand of love. It was no accident that the "disciple whom Jesus loved" and who leaned on the Master's bosom, was the one best qualified to write the inner life of Jesus. You can never know a pupil thoroughly and you can never succeed in bringing out of him the best things until you learn to love him. Love is the master power that unlocks the soul's treasure house and converts its potentialities into actualities.

Love is equally powerful in matters of government. To control children you must touch their hearts and gain their confidence. To the appeal of love they intuitively respond. It is possible by harsh

measures to coerce and repress a child, but you never succeed in awakening in him a sense of loyalty, so necessary in matters of government, by such a method. You may compel him to perform the tasks assigned, as the master compels his slave to do his work, but the obedience which springs from fear of punishment is never spontaneous and whole-hearted. By the application of force you may break the child's will, but you never succeed in reaching the springs of his inner being and starting them into action. Harsh measures may bring about acquiescence with the teacher's will, but it is wholly passive and has no educative value. A stubborn child may be subdued by stern authority, but he is not conquered. True obedience must come from within and must be the cheerful response to the appeal of love. Coleridge states this principle well in his lines:

"O'er wayward childhood wouldst thou hold firm
rule,

And sun thee in the light of happy faces

Love, Hope, Patience—these must be thy graces;
And in thine own heart let them first keep school."

There is no better illustration of the idea we are upholding here than the example of the great Pestalozzi. This distinguished forerunner of modern education is brought before us under the aspect of an earnest, self-sacrificing, enthusiastic philanthropist, endowed with what Richter calls "an almighty

love," whose first and last thought was how he might raise the debased and suffering among his countrymen to a higher level of happiness and knowledge, by bestowing upon them the blessings of education. Here is a man who in the presence of ignorance, obstinacy, squalor, brutality and vice, undertakes to overcome these formidable enemies of human happiness by the simple power of his *heart*. With this single weapon, this primitive teacher, poorly furnished in other respects, really worked wonders. The first lesson that we learn from him is, that the teacher must have a heart, and lacking this, though possessing all the paraphernalia of pedagogic lore, he is a failure. He had gathered together, in an old tumble-down Ursuline convent, scarcely habitable, some eighty wretched children, noisy, dirty, diseased, and ignorant, with the manners and habits of barbarians, and he set for himself the task of transforming these children into intelligent and happy citizens, truly a formidable task. There was only a single weapon on which he relied for conquest—it was his own powerful, loving heart. He says, "I felt convinced that my *heart* would change the condition of my children as speedily as the springtide sun reanimates the earth frozen by winter. Nor was I mistaken. Before the springtide sun melted away the snow from our mountains, you could no longer recognize the same children." The relation of this wonderful teacher

to his pupils is denoted by his own words, "I was obliged unceasingly to be everything to my children. I was alone with them from morning to night. It was from my hand that they received whatever could be of service both to their bodies and minds. All succor, all consolation, all instruction came to them immediately from myself. Their hands were in my hand; my eyes were fixed on theirs, my tears mingled with theirs, my smiles encountered theirs, my soup was their soup, my drink was their drink . . . I was with them when they were in health, by their side when they were ill." Here is a picture of the true teacher, consecrated to his work. This active, practical, self-sacrificing love, ever beaming on the frozen hearts of the children, by degrees melted them and transformed them. He says, "I knew no system, no method, no art but that which rested on the simple consequences of the firm belief of the children in my love towards them. I wished to know no other." It is always so. It is a great principle in human nature. Love conquers all things. If simple love had power to work such miracles in the case of Pestalozzi, there is no reason to believe that it would fail to accomplish similar wonders in the case of any consecrated Bible school teacher.

There should be a feeling of friendship and companionship between teacher and pupils. When such a relation exists, learning is not a task but a pleas-

ure, and teaching is an inspiration. Under such conditions the two parties concerned work together in beautiful harmony and coöperate in the accomplishment of the purpose of the school. Where the atmosphere of personal friendship prevails, the pupils regard the teacher as one of their own number, interested in their personal welfare and helping them to solve their difficult problems; there is no lack of confidence and respect, and perfect freedom characterizes every movement and operation. The supreme example of this is found in the case of Jesus and His disciples, the ideal school for all the ages. The Master Himself said, "I call you not servants. . . but I have called you friends." On all occasions their intercourse was dominated by the spirit of personal friendship. When the Master taught His disciples by discourse or parable, they gathered around Him as their trusted, sympathetic friend, eager to catch every word that fell from His lips. There is no more perfect model of a school anywhere in existence than this. Here is exemplified, on the one hand, the Spirit of the Master, and on the other, the attitude of the learners.

Such should be every Bible school. There should be a feeling of friendship between the teacher and the pupils. This feeling of friendship will ripen into an experience of companionship, which is something much finer and deeper than ordinary friendship. Companionship carries with it, or connotes

the idea of taking part in one another's affairs and sharing one another's pleasures and pains, victories and defeats. While it does not necessarily convey the idea of equality in character or power, it does imply familiarity and freedom, congeniality and reciprocity. Companions may differ widely in rank, in intellectual ability, in the power of achievement, but they live their lives on the same plane and share naturally in their experiences. The true teacher, though in all respects the superior of his pupils, prefers to look upon them as his *fellows* rather than his *disciples*. And in assuming this attitude toward them, he knows how to avoid the fatal mistake of lowering himself into that kind of familiarity which breeds contempt. In all his intercourse, always friendly and companionable, he preserves the dignity that belongs to his person and his station. This he does, not by word or command, but by his manner and bearing which need no restrictive or prohibitive admonitions. In trying to be a "hail fellow, well met," and to be "all things to all men," he loses the respect of his pupils and destroys his usefulness among them. Young people are keen discerners of real character and motive, and are not easily deceived by outward appearances; they have a faculty of discovering sham and hypocrisy, far more accurately than most of us imagine. A child by a kind of instinct knows the true from the false, the real from the affected. When the teacher really

feels friendship and companionship toward his pupils they quickly discover the fact and yield a loving obedience to his authority and a hearty response to his efforts to guide and instruct them in the right way.

CHAPTER IV.

QUALIFICATION OF THE TEACHER FOR HIS OFFICE.

What constitutes an adequate qualification for a Bible school teacher? Our inquiry is broad and includes the degree and kind of knowledge he should possess and also those other qualities of mind and personality which are necessary for the equipment of a successful teacher. Since the teacher is the life of the school, it is of the utmost importance that he have such a mental, moral, and spiritual equipment as will enable him to create and sustain that life at its maximum efficiency. What is to go forth from the school in the way of influence and effective work, the teacher must put into it. Nobody else, not even the superintendent or other officers, is so immediately responsible for the high character of the school and the quality of work done in it as the teacher. If his equipment is defective the fact will soon reveal itself in a lack of spirit and enthusiasm and a low potential. The high potential of a school consists in the qualification of its body of teachers. The character of a school depends on the type of men and women who serve as its teachers.

First of all, the teacher should have a good general education equivalent to that represented by a full four-year high school course as a minimum, and if possible, a full college course. He must know his subject; he cannot teach what he does not know. As Plato said, "No one can give to another that which he has not himself, or teach that of which he has no knowledge." And his knowledge should be more than a mere smattering of many subjects. He must know a great deal more than he is expected to teach, for no one can teach all he knows. To teach the lower things he should know the higher, for the lower is intelligible only in the light of the higher. The elementary classes in the Sunday school should be taught by the ablest teachers that can be had; it is a mistake to put them in charge of beginners. The teacher should bring to his task a well-trained mind capable of forming an independent opinion of the subject matter with which he deals. His mental resources should be well organized so as to have ready command of them for use as occasion may require. The teacher's equipment calls for the best knowledge attainable. The more he knows, other things equal, the better will be his teaching. Knowledge is power. The higher the potential of his knowledge the greater will be the effectiveness of his work. His mind should be stored with knowledge of all kinds from which he may draw forth things old and new,

fresh and interesting, to serve for explanation, for interpretation, for illustration. It is not enough that he has studied the particular lesson which he is about to teach; it is not enough that he has the same kind and extent of knowledge which the members of the class have by their studying of the lesson. He must know many more things, immediately or remotely connected with the lesson; his knowledge must flow down from a higher level and take in a broader sweep. If he is full of knowledge his pupils will take note of the fact and will draw from it inspiration and enthusiasm for their work of learning. An empty mind is never a condition of power. In such matters as gymnastics, athletics, manual training, music, drawing, etc., it is evident that the teacher must be able himself to do the things he wants his pupils to do. So in teaching a Bible lesson, he must give evidence of knowing more about it than what he requires of his pupils. His knowledge of any particular subject should be comprehensive and accurate enough to know what to emphasize and what to pass over lightly. In every lesson one thing is not as important as another; one is in the foreground, another in the background; one is in the focus, another in the fringe. The teacher must know what to stress and what to regard lightly. It is a great mistake to pick up any member of the school who has a little knowledge of the Bible and a ready flow of speech, and put

such person in charge of a class in the Sunday school. The great desideratum in our Sunday schools is really competent teachers.

In addition to a fair degree of textbook knowledge he should also and particularly have technical knowledge, in other words, a knowledge of the principles of pedagogy. Teaching is both a science and an art, and the successful teacher must have, at least, the rudiments of the science of pedagogy. Conditions have changed. It used to be so that any one who was familiar with the Bible was considered capable of teaching a Sunday school class. But that day is past; it is no longer as it used to be. In our day pedagogical knowledge, acquaintance with the history of education and the principles of teaching, training in normal methods, experience in school organization and management are considered essential in the qualification of a teacher for his office. His general knowledge may be ever so comprehensive, if he is deficient in the technique of his calling, he is not well qualified for his office. This really is a very serious defect in our present-day Sunday-school system of religious education. In our public schools the children come in touch with some technical skill; if now their Sunday-school teacher shows himself or herself ignorant of such technical knowledge, we can imagine what effect that would have on their respect for the teacher. To teach the Word of God with the greatest ef-

fectiveness requires the best pedagogical skill, the best methods of instruction, the best reading of the text, the best pronunciation of every word, the best style of expression. Nothing else will do.

There are certain specific branches of knowledge with which the teacher should be familiar. He should have a practical acquaintance with psychology. We single out this subject because it is in the fullest sense basic. In teaching, mind acts on mind, and it is essential to know the nature of mind and how mind functions. No wide-awake teacher can get along without a working knowledge of psychology. He should also know general history, because the facts of history furnish the setting practically for almost every lesson he undertakes to teach. He should be familiar with literature, because the facts of literature are closely interwoven with every subject he deals with. They afford endless valuable material for illustration. He should also be familiar with such subjects as sociology, the various sciences, English grammar, geography, etc.

In the case of the Bible school teacher, in addition to broad general knowledge, an intimate and accurate knowledge of the Bible is absolutely essential. If he is more or less deficient in general knowledge, he must know his Bible. The Bible teacher must make a specialty of Bible study. A superficial knowledge of the Bible is not sufficient. He must know the sacred Book from Genesis to

Revelation, its general makeup, its history, its teachings, the contents of the various books, their authors, their specific purpose, their connection one with another in the unity of the sacred canon, etc. He should have at his command an extensive repertoire of familiar and typical passages or texts which he is able to quote with strict propriety on occasion. At some time or other he should memorize a variety of Bible passages, biblical incidents, whole psalms, selections from the prophets, the Saviour's parables and miracles and principal discourses, such as the Sermon on the Mount, the passion history, the epistles of Paul, etc. On all occasions he must be equipped with a capacious quiver filled with select shafts from the Word of God with which to defend the faith and put to rout the gainsayer. He must know his Bible from the inside out so that he really appreciates the unique appeal which it makes at each stage in the spiritual development of the individual learner, how it is the book of children, of youth, and of mature men. He must have such a command of the Bible's contents that he can select from its rich treasure house of sacred truth the things which are suitable for the needs of the child, for growing restless youth, and for the sober thought of mature men, so that he can deal out to each one according to his needs. A thorough knowledge of the historical, doctrinal, apologetic, theological contents of the holy volume is indeed indispensable, but

this is not enough. The teacher must also know the specific way of salvation as laid down in the gospels and epistles of the New Testament, the office of the Word and the sacraments as means of grace. Without such knowledge his teaching will be barren.

And this knowledge of the Bible, as here described, must not be merely an intellectual apprehension of the truth; this must be supplemented by a personal experience of the truth. After all, the most powerful biblical knowledge which any one can possess is that which comes into the teacher's consciousness through personal experience. We never know anything thoroughly, much less the way of salvation, until we have actually experienced it in our own lives. Prior to experience, truth is only theory and touches us only on the periphery of our spiritual being, but when we have experienced the truth it comes into the innermost center of our being, a transforming, almighty power in our own souls and equally a mighty power to influence other souls. If the Bible school teacher has no deep experience of the truth which he assumes to teach, his knowledge is superficial, his success is partial, and he is poorly qualified for his office.

There are other things supplementary to a knowledge of the subject which also come in for a share of consideration. The teacher must have the gift of imparting instruction. If his knowledge be ever

so complete and he has not the faculty of conveying to the learner what he himself knows, he is not a success. There is an art in teaching, distinct from every other art or accomplishment, and to be well qualified for his office he must know this art. It is a great thing when the teacher can lay open a subject, even the most obscure, to the clear apprehension of the learner, when he can make it luminous to the understanding, when under his touch it is made to glow with interest, when he possesses the rare power of causing a personal appeal of the truth to thrill to the heart of the pupil, working conviction there and bringing the color of awakening spiritual life into his consciousness. These are among the higher acquisitions of the true teacher's art; these are the final, the supreme tests of his equipment.

For the higher qualification of the teacher he should not only know himself and his subject, he should also know the pupil, not outwardly but inwardly. He should know the pupil's character, his temperament, his particular aptitudes, his habits, his characteristic mental traits, his moods, his ideals, his aspirations, his point of view, his modes of thinking, his method of reasoning, his way of reacting to stimuli, the nature of his emotions and of his will, his weak and his strong points, his high lights and his dark shadows, his besetting sins, his temptations, his radical disposition. When he thus knows his

pupil he can adapt his instruction to his needs and so be of the greatest service to him. He should feel a real interest in his pupils. He should strive in every way to help them, to stimulate them to self-reliance, to foster in them the spirit of searching for the truth, to encourage them, to give suggestions how to use their minds, how to study, to guide them in their spiritual development, and to get the most out of every lesson that will be of real benefit to them.

The teacher should possess a magnetic and pleasing personality. Personality counts for more than scholarship. If he is deficient in intellectual training, a strong personality will go far to make amends for other deficiencies. Personality is the man or the woman behind the work, the inner spirit, the true self, the power behind the throne. A fine personality is one of the greatest assets a teacher can possess. It is a source of power for which there is no substitute, a power that does not fail when other powers fail, a power which ever renews itself at the fountain head. It flows with a steady stream and with full pulse. The mightiest influences that work for the moral elevation of mankind emanate from a sanctified personality. The most potent agency that operates on the plastic nature of youth in the formation of character is the personality of those with whom the young come in contact. Wholesome counsel is a good thing, the power of

example is far-reaching, companionship has wonderful possibilities, but none of the educative forces which the teacher can employ is so deeply insinuating, so powerful, so inevitable, so profoundly transforming as the silent, invisible influence that streams from a magnetic personality upon the impressible soul of youth. The teacher's knowledge, his pedagogical skill, his executive ability, his capacity for imparting knowledge are all important elements in his equipment, but they all fade into insignificance compared with the influence of his personality, rich in experience and radiant with a transfiguring spirituality.

Another element in the teacher's qualification is enthusiasm. Enthusiasm, as the name denotes, is the stirring of a divinity within one. It means a certain ecstasy of spirit akin to inspiration, a state of impassioned emotion, a transport of kindled and kindling fervor of soul. Without something of this sort the teacher will not attain the highest success. He must feel within his soul and radiate from him the white heat of love in his work. There is a true and a false enthusiasm. Mere gush or vaporing sentimentality is not true enthusiasm, the wild clamoring of the mob, the extravagant utterances and frenzied actions of the fanatic are not true enthusiasm. True enthusiasm is more than animal excitement, more than bodily gestures, more than hysterical demonstration which in a moment can

pass from tears to laughter, which one day cries out "Hosanna to the Son of David," and the next, "Crucify Him!" It is deep and quiet, serious, thoughtful, and controlled. It springs from the conviction of a great truth which stirs the heart to its utmost center. It comes from a deep experience, and it maintains itself at a uniform level. "Nothing great is ever achieved without enthusiasm." Our greatest preachers and teachers, statesmen, artists, musicians, workers in every field of human activity have been enthusiasts and did their best work with the white heat of love. "Enthusiasm goes out," as Emerson said. "It is the height of man, passing from the human to the Divine." It is an expansive force, urging men to plan and do greater things. It reaches out, as faith does, to lay hold on the things not seen. The teacher of youth, whether in day school or Sunday school work, who is void of enthusiasm, has missed his calling.

"Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another's soul wouldst reach;
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech."

Consecration to his work is another element in the teacher's qualification. He should be consecrated, that is, in the deepest sense, given body, soul, and spirit to his work, so that he feels as St. Paul felt when he said, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!" He is doing a work of love for the Mas-

ter, and love constrains him. His is a sacred task in the performance of which he should feel the influence of the Holy Spirit, not only appointing him to his work, but also sustaining him in the doing of it. He should be actuated by the right kind of spirit. No element of the teacher's qualification is more important. However excellent his intellectual and other qualifications may be, if he has not the spirit of consecration he cannot achieve the highest success, he is not fit for his office. The true spirit of the teacher is one that seeks not his own, but seeks to be, in the highest degree, helpful to those entrusted to his care, one that appreciates the dignity and the sublime possibilities of the human soul whose guardian he assumes to be, one that recognizes and reverences the image of God in every child over whose education he presides, and burns with the desire to be humbly instrumental in training it for its immortal destiny. The teacher should be possessed of the Master's spirit, whose meat and drink it was to minister to the needs of His own.

And, lastly, the teacher should have right views of what religious education is. What is it to educate a human soul so that it may come into a right relation to its Creator and Saviour, and attain a full development of its God-given powers? This is one of the first questions which one who is about to assume the office of a teacher should ask himself. "What sculpture is to the block of marble," said

Addison, "education is to the human soul." Its aim and object is to fashion the human soul so as to bring out its native beauty and powers, and to shape it into forms of perfection. Education is more than the acquisition of knowledge; it is the development of those powers by which knowledge may be acquired. Religious education is training a child in the way he should go, so that when he is old he will not depart from that way. Religious education is making religious ideas and conduct second nature to the child and youth. This is what Bible school instruction stands for, and to promote this end is the function of the Bible school.

CHAPTER V.

PREPARATION OF THE LESSON.

No one should attempt to teach a lesson without thorough preparation, both on the part of the teacher and also of the learner. It is presupposed that a teacher has general knowledge of the subject he would teach. But this is not enough; he must make specific and special preparation for each lesson. The subject to be presented to the class must be brought fresh into his mind. It makes no difference how many times he has taught the same lesson before. In order to keep alive his own interest, as well as to insure interest on the part of the class, the subject must be made new by fresh illustrations, by new examples drawn from recent reading and experience, by a new viewpoint. This can be done only by careful preparation for each particular lesson. There may be occasions, in the absence of the regular teacher, when a person may be called upon to teach a class in Sunday school on the spur of the moment without previous preparation. But this should be a rare exception. The teacher should come before his class fresh from his studies. The more thorough his preparation the better will be

his work. The time was when anybody, with a fair degree of intelligence, could stand up and teach a class, but that time is a thing of the past. Such practices were considered quite allowable before pedagogy found any place in Sunday-school teaching; but now they would be frowned upon.

There are several different ways in which preparation is to be made. First, by careful study. The successful, progressive teacher is a close student, one who has acquired systematic study habits. He should not require of his pupils what he does not do himself. He should make it apparent to all that he himself has studied the lesson, just as the pupils are expected to do. He should set the example; in this, as in other things, he should *lead* and not *drive*. No one will succeed in creating an enthusiasm for studies, who is not himself a student. The student spirit in the teacher will arouse a student spirit in the pupils. That spirit is contagious and quickly spreads over the whole school. Every progressive teacher will gather around him a choice little library of books and periodicals and other helps from which he may draw fresh materials for each lesson period. It does not need to be a large and expensive collection, but it should be *choice* and up-to-date. The reading of books and magazine articles should be the first and greatest burden of his preparation. In our day no one is fit to teach who does not read, who cannot from his ever-growing storehouse of

gathered treasures bring forth things new and old with which to illuminate the sacred text. Then he should make an outline plan of the lesson. In doing this great care should be taken to articulate every part with every other part so as to make a complete chain. Good outline making is a fine art in itself, and the best kind of index of scholarly procedure. Close attention should be given to important details. Every event and every fact must stand in its right place with respect to the whole. This requires his best thought. When the subject matter of the lesson is presented in such a systematic way, it will aid the pupil greatly in grasping and understanding what is taught. The writer's own experience, covering a period of many years, testifies to the value of such a method. He has found, from the testimony of many former pupils, that those subjects which were presented in this way were the ones that made the most lasting impression, and which are remembered above all others.

Meditation is another important way of preparation. By meditation he digests and assimilates what new materials he has gathered from reading and conversation; he makes them his own, substance of his substance, thought of his thought. The effect will be that a fresh current of life will flow through the lesson, and new life will carry with it the effect of awakening life and interest in the pupils. When the teacher comes before the class full of his sub-

ject by reading, study and meditation, and radiating life and energy in every word he utters and in every movement of his body, his own spirit will quickly be transmitted to the class. By meditation he is able to marshal his own mental resources and make them serve in the work of instruction. By meditation he can collect and arrange his best information and thoughts on any given subject. It aids his memory and helps him to concentrate his attention upon the subject in hand. Reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, but meditation makes the accurate man.

One of the Bible teacher's greatest means of preparation is *prayer*. He makes his most effective preparation on his knees. He should go from the private prayer closet to the class room. In the closet he communes with the Master and fills his soul with the inspiration that comes from such communion. In such an exercise the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ, the things contained in the lesson, and shows them to him, makes them clear to his understanding and warms them with the life-breath of the Spirit. And then when he comes forth from his closet, it will be with him as it was with Moses when he descended from the Mount, his face will shine with the radiance of the divine presence. It will be as it was with those rulers of the Jews, of whom it is said that when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they marvelled and

took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. So the class will take knowledge from the teacher's manner, the brightness of his countenance, the power of his words, the intonation of his voice, that he had been with Jesus. The particular virtue of the prayer preparation of which we are here speaking, consists in a specific attitude of soul for which there can be no substitute. In prayer the mind is open toward the spiritual side of life and is in a peculiar sense receptive of heavenly influences. It lets the light of heaven and of the spiritual world shine into it to illuminate its darkened understanding. In this way it often occurs that when the teacher has earnestly prayed over a difficult passage of Holy Scripture it becomes plain and luminous to him. It is not necessary to call in supernatural agency to explain such experience; it can be explained on the ordinary psychological principles, for the Holy Spirit uses these to perform His work of illumination. The peculiar benefit of prayer consists in an open and receptive attitude of soul in which hints and suggestions will come into consciousness not otherwise obtainable. To the mind that is open to the light, light will come. In no other state is the mind so open to the light as in prayer. The poet voices a great truth when he says:

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

Our Saviour says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." This promise is fulfilled in prayer. Prayer is an "asking," "seeking," "knocking" attitude, and he that prays earnestly is sure to come into the secret of things. Mysteries that the intellect cannot explain become clear to the prayerful soul. Prayer is the surest way to get into sympathy with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and where there is such a sympathy on the part of the student the inner sense of Scripture will reveal itself far more fully than is possible in any other way. When we pray over a subject, that subject begins to open itself to our understanding, the mental powers are quickened, the reason's insight is sharpened, the entire inner being is stimulated and made responsive to the appeals of truth. Prayer is a mode of learning, for as has been well said, "No man ever prayed heartily without learning something." We recall the familiar maxim, "To have prayed well is to study well." We are told that it was Martin Luther's practice while engaged in the translation of the Scriptures, that when he had a particularly difficult task before him he would spend more time in prayer than usual. In this way he found he could make much better progress in his work. The rule is good and eminently practical. If we have only a limited time to prepare for some difficult task, it pays to spend more time in prayer.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TEACHER'S IDEALISM AND OPTIMISM.

The true teacher is both an idealist and an optimist. His idealism finds its expression in his professional life. In the pursuit of his calling he sets up ideals of perfection which he strives to realize. It is fitting that the Bible school teacher cherish lofty and noble ideals, such as correspond to his high calling. The fact that he does not always realize his ideals should make no difference in his attitude toward them, for the greater benefit is not in realization but in *having* noble ideals. It is the nature of ideals that the more you pursue them the more they recede from you. When you approach the fulfilment of an ideal you unconsciously change its character, you elevate it, refine it, ennoble it, spiritualize it so that you never overtake it. The fact is that an ideal realized is no longer an ideal, though it may become a stepping stone to another and still higher one. Browning happily expresses the idea in the familiar lines,

“Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what’s a heaven for?”

He who is ambitious to fill his life with praiseworthy achievements in the service of the Master

will reach out after many things and higher things than he is able to grasp. "'Tis not what man *does* which exalts him, but what man *would* do!"

"What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me."

The unattainableness of high ideals is the thought which Whittier expresses in his poem, "The Vanishers." These mystic spirits ever go before him and he sees signs of their presence on every hand, but he is never able to overtake them.

"Flitting, passing, seen and gone,
Never reached nor found at rest,
Baffling search, but beckoning on
To the Sunset of the Blest."

These spirits in the thought of the poet stand for lofty ideals, which point the way and afford inspiration in the line of noble endeavor, but they are never fully realized in this life. Even though they are not realized they make our life richer and better and more fruitful.

Idealism is another name for vision; it has for its essence a vision of possible achievement, which affords stimulation and zeal in the doing of good; it is the prophecy of a life filled with Christlike service and ripening unto fruition where only faint foregleams are visible. The teacher must see his work in vision, for only so can he appreciate the deepest and best things in his calling. The wise man says, "Where there is no vision the people perish," and we see this utterance repeatedly verified in history.

Carlyle says, "The degree of vision that dwells in a man is the correct measure of the man." St. John's words, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," suggest a glorious vision of the possibilities of the life of sonship in Christ, a vision of a wonderful and inspiring unfolding of spiritual manhood. Even so with the godly teacher; he cannot now understand the significance of his labors in the Lord's vineyard, but he should see the results in vision. There is not enough vision in our life; it is too prosaic, too humdrum, too matter of fact, and not enough of the inspirational element in it. We need to paint more *sky* into our life's picture; the material vault of our heaven is altogether too low. When Thorwaldsen's famous statue of The Christ was being unveiled, the great sculptor was seen to weep. His friends asked him why he wept when everybody else was rejoicing. He replied, "My genius is decaying. This statue is the first of my works that I have ever felt completely satisfied with: Till now my ideal has always been far beyond what I could execute, but it is so no longer. I can never create a great work of art again." The principle herein involved is true for all time and for all kinds of achievement. When a man, in any calling, is completely satisfied with his work he has reached the acme of his ability, he cannot climb any higher, because for him there are no greater heights.

The ideal, in every walk of life, like a pillar of

cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, has ever guided the individual and the nations on their march to the land of promise. Let no one think lightly of the ideal as something merely fanciful. It has its ground in reality; it grows out of the real and nourishes itself upon the real. As has been said, "The real is never a perfect pyramid; it is always truncated, the top being out of sight." The real is like a high mountain peak, whose summit is hidden from view by clouds; the ideal carries the view upward beyond the clouds and sees the whole in its beauty and majesty. The leaders of the world's progress have made their greatest discoveries and inventions when they left the region of the seen and the known and followed their imaginations by new paths to regions before unseen and unknown. They looked not at the things seen, but at the things not seen, and thus attained their greatest heights and their noblest achievements. It is really true, as has been said, that ideals rule the world. The realization of one's ideals is necessarily a very slow process. It is so in the nature of things. The gods take a step, and ages move. "It is not so much *ideas* that make a people's civilization, as their *ideals*. *Ideas* are what people think; *ideals* are what they strive for; they are ideas in action." Jacob's beautiful dream of a ladder that reached all the way from earth to heaven, with its angels ascending and descending, is a true picture of an earnest soul's ideal-

ism. The world's greatest men, its poets, philosophers, prophets, statesmen, philanthropists, reformers, have all been idealists. The Man of Nazareth Himself was the greatest of idealists. He came to set up an ideal kingdom of heaven upon earth, in which were to dwell righteousness and holiness, such as have never been realized among men. The ideals of the world's great men inspired them with faith and courage, urged them forward, transfigured common things, and embodied themselves in institutions, reforms, and movements that changed the course of history. The touch of a noble idealism lifts the world's workers above the seen, the transient, the temporal, and makes them feel their native affinities with the invisible, the spiritual, the heavenly, the eternal. The world is kept young and sacred and sweet by those who dream of a Golden Age, and that Golden Age is their ideals realized.

One of the finest and most useful things about idealism is the fact that we tend to become what we set up as a model of perfection. We become in a greater or less degree what we admire and set our hearts upon. This philosophy of idealism is most aptly set forth in St. Paul's words in 2 Cor. 3. 18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." The thought here conveyed is that if we fix our eyes upon the glory of the Lord and keep gazing upon this glorious image we

unconsciously are changed into that image. Perhaps the best interpretation of St. Paul's words is Hawthorne's story of "The Great Stone Face." By looking at the outline of that kindly human face carved out of the rock by nature's own handiwork, and always longing to be like it from his infancy up, Ernest, the hero of the story, was being slowly "changed into the same image." Herein is contained the profound principle in the nature of things that we tend to become what we love, what we set our hearts upon. Such as we earnestly wish to be we tend to become. One travels unconsciously toward the thing he has set his heart upon, being drawn by an irresistible affinity for the thing of his choice. Man goes where his heart is; he becomes like what he worships; he grows gradually into the image and likeness of that which he aspires to be and which he adores. The prophet Hosea says of Israel, "Israel's abominations were according as they loved." The terminal of a wicked love is a wicked character. When a man sets his heart on wicked things he will work only abominations; what he aspires to be, that he becomes. By the same law of nature, if a man sets his affections upon things that are good and true and beautiful he will grow into the likeness of his objective; if his ideals are pure and noble he unconsciously moves toward the goal of his aspirations. As the heart of man goes, so goes the life, for "out of the heart are the

issues of life." As our ideals, so will be our achievements.

We can readily understand what bearing all this has upon the Bible school teacher's calling. As his ideals, so will be his work. No other class of workers has need of such high and inspiring ideals as the teacher whose function it is to interpret the Word of God to young souls and to set their feet upon the highway that leads to immortal glory. He deals with the loftiest conceptions of truth, with things spiritual and eternal, and for this reason he has need of shaping his work after a divine model. His ideal of perception which he tries to imitate should ever be that of the Great Teacher come from God, and who shows us the way of salvation. To be like Jesus, the Model Teacher, should be his highest ambition.

The spirit of the true teacher is nobly optimistic. He has reasons to be a thorough-going optimist. He knows that he is doing service for his Master, and that the sure promises of God are back of him. What he does by faith must have the divine blessing, and cannot fail. The blessing may be delayed, but he knows that it will surely come, even as comes the latter rain in its season. The life of faith, in its deepest nature, is optimistic. It looks on the bright side of things; it knows that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God." It is not greatly disturbed by adverse experiences,

for it cherishes the thought that every dark cloud has its silver lining. The children of the kingdom are happy with the thought that their work cannot fail, for it is God's own work. Faith lays hold on the promises of God and relies upon the certainty of their fulfilment. In the final outcome, all things are for the best. The optimistic point of view is not only the most comforting; it is also the most truly practical and the most deeply philosophical.

The optimistic spirit well becomes the Bible school teacher. He sows his seed in faith, but the harvest is not till by and by. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." He, more than any other class of workers, has need of that frame of mind which leads him to feel that however unfavorable the immediate circumstances may be, all is for the best, and a happy issue is assured. He needs to cultivate a mental attitude toward his environment, like unto that of Abraham, "who against hope believed in hope." In such a state of mind he is not greatly disturbed by adversities, but evermore sees the bright side of things.

"Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm."

Within his own calm soul he ever repeats the words of Tennyson,

"I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring."

The optimistic soul is happy and contented, for it knows that God is good, and will surely fulfil all His promises.

From the purely pedagogical point of view the optimistic mood has many advantages. It makes a cheerful spirit, a vivacious manner, and a shining countenance, which are an asset of incalculable value. It begets a certain quality of tonicity so characteristic of a working school, and creates around it an atmosphere that is powerfully stimulating to all who come within the radius of its influence. The optimistic spirit is highly contagious; from the teacher it quickly spreads over the whole school till each one is set aglow with its magic fire. It awakens life in the activities of the school and fosters an enthusiasm that transforms the entire group into a busy beehive. Apart from all moral considerations it is good policy to cultivate an optimistic spirit in the school.

CHAPTER VII.

"INSTRUCT," "EDUCATE," "TEACH."

In educational theory there are three words which stand for three widely different conceptions of the educative process. These words are "Instruct," "Educate," and "Teach." "Instruct," as the etymology of the word suggests, denotes a building in process. According to this idea the teacher's business is to build up a structure of knowledge in the pupil's mind in a mechanical fashion. The mind of the pupil is regarded as a passive recipient, an empty peck measure, and the teacher's objective is to fill this empty vessel to its capacity. The teacher does everything, and the pupil is not required to do anything except simply to receive. "Instruct" denotes a pouring-in process. It consists in lecturing to the class upon every subject which may occur to the teacher and of which he has some knowledge. His chief aim is to bring before the pupil as many facts as possible in a limited time, without any thought of the pupil's mental condition or needs. It lays great stress upon rules and all the mechanical appliances known to the art. It crams the mind of the pupil with facts, dates, words, fig-

ures, names, etc. Knowledge-getting is the chief aim. It raises no questions about assimilation. It encourages routine at the expense of life. It knows nothing about waking up mind; for its purpose the mind does not need to be awake, for it conceives the mind of the learner to be passive or simply receptive. The learner's great virtue is that he offers no resistance, that he is patient and receptive. This idea of education has little need of psychology; it is not necessary to know the nature and functioning of the mind. The pupil is not expected to ask questions, or manifest any sign of curiosity, or to indulge the spirit of investigation; he is not encouraged to think for himself; it is his part of the classroom exercise to take what is offered him in the spirit of docility and ask no questions for conscience's sake. The teacher frames the different facts together into forms of his own liking as the artist puts together the blocks of marble in the making of a mosaic picture. There is little thought of growth, no element of spontaneity, no idea of personality. The learner's mind functions like a phonograph, which receives and gives out exactly what is spoken into it, no more and no less.

Widely different from this is the idea suggested by the word "educate." This means to lead out, to draw forth, to develop. In some respects it is the opposite of the preceding idea. Its distinguishing characteristic is the conception of mind on which

it rests. The mind of the learner is not a passive recipient, but an active agent with slumbering powers and possibilities which need to be awakened and drawn out into life and action. The teacher's function is to stimulate, to touch into life, to arouse, to lead out the latent powers of the pupil's soul, to convert its potentialities into actualities; he deals with souls in action. He regards the pupil, not as a mechanism, but as a living personality. His business is to preside over the unfolding of a personality rich in possibilities, lofty in destiny, immortal in its nature, Godlike in its endowment. He depends, not on what he can put into the pupil, but rather what he can bring out of him. The educator is a developer. He does to the young soul what the sunbeam does to the rosebud. The educator's aim is to awaken the slumbering powers of the soul and to start them into action. He encourages the pupil to do his own thinking, to solve his own problems, to draw his own conclusions. The knowledge which he imparts is not so much inert, dead lumber, but it has living, organizing, fructifying power and leads to further knowledge. He helps the pupil to find himself and to feel himself a dynamic agency. He encourages the pupil to have confidence in himself and to draw upon his own resources. He opens the floodgates of the pupil's psychic and personal forces and directs them into channels which widen and deepen as they flow, like the holy waters, issu-

ing from the side of the altar, in Ezekiel's vision. His viewpoint of the educational process is the dynamic rather than the static. He sees the strong oak tree in the tiny acorn, the beautiful statue in the rough block of marble, the magnificent temple in the mass of material, the finished picture in the outline of the sketch, the organized cosmos in the primitive chaos, and he makes it his business to convert possibilities into realities. To him the pupil's mind is a prophecy and he seeks to lead it out into fulfilment in real life. He is ever inspired by the thought of what a young soul may develop into by wise handling. It doth not yet appear what he shall be. By trial and failure he strengthens the forces within the pupil and helps him to realize the promises of achievement that reverberate in the depths of his being. He stimulates him to give himself to the call of destiny. He guides him in shaping high and noble ideals in the pursuit of which he will discover what he is good for and what the mission is to which the Creator has appointed him. At every step, in every phase, education is a drawing-out, a developing process.

But there is another idea, perhaps a more excellent one, suggested by the word 'teach.' This word is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word which means to show, to point out. The teacher is one who shows where knowledge is to be found, and teaching consists in pointing out the way of knowledge. This

conception, like the preceding, regards the pupil as an active agent. The relation of teacher to pupil is aptly represented under the analogy of going on a journey or climbing a mountain peak. The teacher knows the way, he has been over it before, he is acquainted with the difficult places, with the by-paths that are apt to confuse the uninitiated, with every turn and crossroad, and he says to the pupil, "Come along, I will be your guide, I will assist you where you may need assistance." He shows himself a friend and companion to the inexperienced pupil. He is ever by his side to suggest, to encourage, to explain, to inspire courage, hope, and perseverance. He leads him into green pastures and by the still waters. He shows him where truth is to be found and how to find it. He does not solve his problems for him, but he gives suggestions how to proceed. He shows him how to study, how to use his mind, how to economize his time and energy, how to train his senses in the perception of objects, how to improve his memory, how to make helpful associations, how to form right habits. The teacher is an adviser and ever-present helper in times of perplexity and difficulty, just when the young and inexperienced learner most of all needs counsel and direction. He speaks the timely word of encouragement and points to the brighter side of experience. If the road to knowledge is steep and hard, he tells him of places where

it will be better farther on. The traveller to the heights of knowledge meets with pitfalls and various other dangers by the way, the teacher points these out and saves him from falling into serious error. There are false appearances on every hand, for things are not what they seem, and not all is gold that glitters. There are mirages on the desert plains which might deceive the very elect. When such experiences come to the young aspirant, the teacher shows him how to distinguish the false from the true, the wrong from the right, and how to go so as to avoid the things that make trouble. Every pupil has his "plateau of despond," when he seems to be making no progress, when he cannot learn anything more, when the avenues to knowledge seem closed up, when all things he touches sound hollow, and when he feels disgusted with the world. At such critical moments the faithful teacher, who foresaw what is occurring in his pupil's experience, is at his side to show him the way over the barren places, how he may turn his defeats into victories and change the gloomy night season into the freshness and glory of a new day. In all the diversified and harassing experiences of student life the teacher is ever present as the one who shows the right way, how knowledge is to be gained, how problems are to be solved, how difficulties are to be overcome, how growth in strength and efficiency is to be achieved. Such is the teacher as distinguished from

the instructor and educator. This is the highest conception of the educative process. It combines the good qualities of both the others and carries into perfection as nearly as is possible the noble art of training souls in the way of life. Its supreme exemplar is the Master Himself. He is never pictured to us as the Instructor or the Educator, but always as the Great Teacher, for such He truly was. He came to show us the way of salvation, to show us the things spiritually discerned, to show us the kingdom of heaven upon earth, to show us the starry highway that leads to immortal glory.

Our Bible schools need *teachers*, rather than *instructors*, men and women who have the true teacher spirit, who can show the children the beauties and wonders of the Sacred Word, who can point out to them the way of salvation, who can bring them in touch with things spiritual and foster in them a love for the things of the kingdom. Perhaps in no other respect is the weakness of our Bible schools so apparent as in the quality of their teachers. Sacred pedagogy has for its objective the task of raising the ideal and standards of teaching and of stimulating a higher grade of work in the classroom. When religious education is conceived from the viewpoint of the educator and the teacher, it must come about that better methods will be employed and a higher degree of efficiency will be attained. Our Bible schools in this country are passing through

a period of transition. The old traditional ways are giving place to new and better ones, based on psychology and practical pedagogy. The teaching function is undergoing a revolutionizing process in which the things approved by reason and experiment are sure to survive, while those found wanting will go out of existence as being no longer useful. The philosophy of this movement is summarized in the three conceptions outlined in this chapter. The words 'instruct,' 'educate,' and 'teach' go to the bottom of educational theory; they express the best we know of the science of education. We wait with eager expectation the results of the new way of thinking about matters educational. The new way, which gives the highest place to the teaching idea, places the Word of God in the center and makes everything revolve about it. Its great task is to teach the Word of God, to bring its saving truths into vital contact with the growing soul of childhood and youth. The Bible school worker's function is to *teach* the Word of God and wait for the increase.

CHAPTER VIII.

ASSIMILATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Here the point of view is shifted from the teacher to the learner. Our present inquiry has to do with those conditions of the learner's mind which make the acquisition of knowledge possible. Instruction is profitable only so far as the pupil assimilates the instruction given, that is, so far as he makes it his own. This whole subject, including also the phraseology employed, rests on a physiological analogy. The food we eat, in order to be of any benefit to the body, must go through a process of digestion and assimilation. At the end of this process is assimilation, which means the conversion of the digested food materials into the various tissues of the body. The mental process of acquiring knowledge of things external to the mind is quite similar to physical assimilation. Our sensations and perceptions, by a mysterious process, are transformed into knowledge. What comes into the mind as crude material is changed into ideas and thought. Sensations are not knowledge, they are only the raw material out of which knowledge is developed by abstraction, generalization, comparison, in a word, by thinking.

In the matter of instruction, the thing of primary importance is not how much information is given, but how much the learner assimilates. The success of the teaching function ultimately depends on the degree of assimilation. If instruction in the form of facts, figures, dates, events, etc., is not assimilated, it is of no value; it lies, so to speak, in the mind inactive, a foreign lifeless mass of material, a burden to the memory, just as undigested morsels of food are a heavy weight to the stomach, a detriment rather than a benefit to physical health. It is a positive injury to the mind to overload it with information. The condition of mental health and mental growth is to supply information of such a quantity and of such kind as the mind will readily take up and make its own. Imparting information is not real and profitable instruction unless the items of information become incorporated in the concept-mass of the pupil, so that they are substance of his substance, life of his life, spirit of his spirit. Overloading is a very common error on the part of inexperienced teachers, the result of which is a kind of mental dyspepsia. The marks of this mental unhealth are a loss of interest, general indifference, mental lethargy, stagnation of energy.

The principle of mental assimilation is also called *apperception*. Let us study this great and fundamental principle of pedagogy. In a broad untechnical sense, apperception means that a learner ac-

quires new things on the background of his previous experiences. What he can take up and make his own depends on what he already knows. New concepts come into his consciousness only as they articulate themselves with those already in the concept-mass. If the new things which the pupil is expected to learn have no points of similarity to the things he already knows it will not be possible for them to articulate with the old, hence they remain isolated, unassimilated, foreign elements, having no educative value. The ideas a learner gets of a new thing which he is trying to perceive depend upon the ideas he has of other related things previously perceived, and which have some resemblance to the new thing. All perception is really a process of apperception, that is, a new perception upon an old perception.

A more technical definition of apperception is that given by Professor Lange in his book on this subject. He says, "Apperception is that psychical activity by which individual perceptions, ideas, or idea-complexes are brought into relation to our previous intellectual and emotional life, assimilated with it, and thus raised to greater clearness, activity, and significance." Apperception is a process of interpreting new experiences in the light of old ones. Putting this in other words, we may say that in the act of learning new things we find and come to understand what is already in our minds. This

is the meaning of the Master's saying, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." In these remarkable words He states a profound fundamental law of pedagogy and of psychology. More is given the learner in proportion as he already has, that is, the more points of contact and of similarity the new teachings find in the old concept-mass, the better will be his comprehension of the new. The saying of Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister*, his educational masterpiece, comes to mind in this connection: "Man understands nothing but what is appropriate to him. Hence the duty of saying to others only the things that they can receive." Apperception means that the new is modified by the old, and the old by the new; we see in the new only what our old experience enables us to see; if we fail to see in the new some points of resemblance to what is present in the old, we cannot know the new. We can know a thing only when we can relate it to other things already known. What we cannot relate we cannot understand. Apperception serves both to clarify and to unify our knowledge. As it is the function of the association centers of the brain to adjust and to integrate the various sense impressions, so it is the office of apperception to join together disconnected and fragmentary items of knowledge into a unity of conscious intelligence.

In order that this principle may work with the greatest effectiveness there must be in the mind of the learner a rich and varied apperceiving mass. The many strange and difficult things which pupils are called upon to learn cannot be mastered unless there are present in their consciousness already ideas that bear some resemblance to those they are trying to learn. No new revelation of truth can come to a soul which does not have some prepossession of ideas that lead up to such revelation. This is what we mean by apperceiving mass. The facility of acquiring new ideas and the ability to comprehend will depend on the apperceiving mass. Experience is another name for the same thing. Experience is the greatest aid to learning and the most powerful means of assimilating newly acquired knowledge.

From the foregoing considerations it follows that the teacher, first of all, should study to acquaint himself with the mental contents of his pupils. The more he knows about the pupils' concept-mass, or in other words, their experience, the better able will he be to adapt his instruction to their needs. His teaching should proceed from the present state or condition of the pupil's mind; if it does not, it will be a hit-or-miss process. It is far easier for the teacher to come down to the plane of the learners than for the learners to rise to the plane of the teacher. To teach children successfully we must become as little children and present truths in a

way that they can grasp them. The crowning quality of the great teacher is that he can see things from the viewpoint of the children whom he would teach. Of every great teacher that ever lived it could be said that he strove to find out what was in the minds of his pupils. No one has stated this principle of apperception more powerfully than Professor James, when he said, "The great maxim in pedagogy is to knit every new piece of knowledge on to a preëxisting curiosity, that is, to assimilate its matter in some way to what is already known."

This principle is of first importance in practical pedagogy. It concerns particularly the act of teaching and the arrangement of the curriculum. No teacher can succeed in making a child understand anything which has no connection with other things which the child already knows. At every step the new material must be correlated with things already in the child's concept-mass. The things last learned must be linked up somehow with the things next to be learned. Each lesson, if rightly planned, is a member of a progressive series which leads up to the mastery of a given subject, each lesson is a step to prepare the way for the next step to be taken. If the series is broken by projecting into it a wholly foreign element which has no backward relationship, the result is confusion and weakness. The mind grows into strength and ability of comprehension by assimilating ideas, just as the body

grows strong by assimilating wholesome food. No new subject should be introduced without linking it with subjects previously studied; the way for the next subject should be prepared by making points in previous lessons stand out in prominence.

In acquiring religious knowledge the principle of assimilation is even still more important, because religious knowledge is more deeply related to the learner's spiritual life than is ordinary secular knowledge. Acquiring religious knowledge has to do with the innermost fountains of spiritual life and power. It is a pitiful waste of energy on the part of the teacher and a positive injury to the learner to pour in upon the patient, long-suffering learner great masses of names, words, facts, dates, events, doctrines, etc., which are never assimilated. The result is not stimulation of spiritual life, but a species of mental and spiritual atrophy. The communication of Biblical knowledge which is not assimilated does not minister to real edification, but rather to spiritual confusion and weakness. "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!" This is apperception applied. A lesson, like a word, in due season, a lesson at the opportune moment, at the right point in the child's mental development, when his mind is prepared for it, how good it is! How it builds up the child's mind, how it strengthens his thinking powers, how it draws out his spiritual life, how it ministers to real understanding

and appreciation of spiritual things! On the contrary, a lesson out of season, a lesson where the continuity of subject matter is broken, a lesson that has no relation to the child's experience, has a weakening effect. There is a fitness of things in the moral order of the world, and instruction in spiritual matters must conform to this order. There is a time in the learner's life, a conjunction of events, a state of mind, when a certain lesson, a particular Bible truth is especially opportune. Great destinies often turn upon crucial moments. There are crisis points in every learner's experience, when the call of destiny is heard reëchoing in his innermost being; then a word fitly spoken, or a great truth earnestly pressed home, is a power of God unto salvation. The Word of God is, indeed, always the power of God unto salvation, but then it must be spoken in due season, it must be timely in its application to the individual soul.

When we study the practice of the Great Teacher, we find that His teachings were always opportune, there was always a fitness to the occasion and to the individuals; His words fitted the mental and spiritual conditions of those to whom He spoke. This is strikingly illustrated in the case of His conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well Sychar and also His words spoken to Nicodemus. What He said to these persons exactly fitted to their mental states. And so on all other occasions,

the messages He brought to people were a response to their individual experiences; they were never spoken at random. If the aim of His teaching was to draw out and confirm an incipient faith, as in the case of the Syrophœnician woman, who, in answer to His challenge, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto dogs," replied, "Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs," He suited His words to the individual's state of mind and experience. That Greek woman evidently had some previous knowledge of the Saviour's power to cast out evil spirits, so that what He said to her exactly fitted her mental condition. What she already knew of the Miracle-Worker led to a fuller apprehension of the words He spoke to her. We often hear Him saying, "If thou canst believe, it shall be even according to your faith." These persons had some faith, and with that beginning of faith He related His words of instruction and encouragement. When He wished to draw out into life His disciples' conception of discipleship, He presented the idea to them under the metaphor "fishers of men." He correlated the idea of discipleship with a fact that stood out prominent in their experience, for they were fishers by trade, and now He will make them "fishers of men." Thus it was that He made the most difficult and remote conceptions of things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven easy and clear

by utilizing the mental contents already present in those whom He sought to instruct in the way of life.

The Bible school teacher can do no better than follow the example of the Great Teacher. It is his task to repeat the stories of the Bible and to interpret them to the learner so that their truths become incorporated into his very life. In order that they may have a meaning to him the teacher must connect their vital points with things that the learner has experienced. In this way the truths of the Bible become a power of life, awakening new life, converting the soul, and transforming the old nature into the likeness of the children of God.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTIAN NURTURE.

In our Lutheran system of religious education there are found certain ideas which are characteristic of Lutheran theology and Lutheran polity, and they are fundamental in the structure of Lutheran institutions. Hence we may say that there is a distinctive Lutheran pedagogy. One of these ideas is that of Christian nurture. The nature of this method of religious education is best seen in connection with the Lutheran doctrine of baptism. The child in its early infancy is inducted into the Church by the rite of holy baptism, and by this sacrament the child becomes a member of the body of Christian believers. This initiatory act is followed up by a systematic and long-continued course of training in the doctrines and usages of the Christian religion. It is the solemn duty of the parents and the sponsors to see to it that the child who has received baptism is duly instructed and trained in the essentials of religion. The future life of the child will depend on the education it receives at the hands of those who are responsible for its upbringing in the fear and admonition of the Lord. By baptism

the child is planted into the kingdom of heaven, and its growth into an upright Christian manhood or womanhood is a matter, under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, of education. By baptism the natural child becomes a child of God to be trained in the teachings, spirit, and life of the family of believers. The idea of Christian nurture is well expressed in the words of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." So far as the human part of the child's development is concerned, great stress is laid upon training or education. If the parents or sponsors are faithful to their baptismal vows, the child that has been dedicated to God in holy baptism will grow up into a godly character; it will not need conversion, in the revivalistic sense, because it is already a regenerated member of the household of God. For a period of years the training process takes place in the home under the direction of the parents. Later on, when the child reaches the age of understanding, the home training is supplemented by catechization and confirmation under the supervision of the Church, whereby the confirmand takes upon himself the vows made for him by his parents or sponsors in his baptism. This is the idea of Christian nurture in the Lutheran system of religious education.

In this system of religious education it will be observed that a peculiar emphasis is laid upon teach-

ing or training. That is central in the system. The process begins in the home with the earliest days of infancy, and is systematically kept up until maturity. Religious ideas and the facts of sacred story are instilled into the infant mind while the child is learning its first rudiments of knowledge, while it is learning language and forming habits of acting. Thus it comes about that in the case of a person brought up this way there never was a time when he did not know about his God and Saviour and when he did not love his God and Saviour. The mind of the child is like a garden in which delicate and precious plants are starting to grow, and where constant and judicious care is necessary lest these plants be choked or otherwise interfered with in their normal growth. Under God, everything depends on right training. As the stream of life is started in its initial stage, so will it flow the rest of its course.'

The formation of right habits of thinking and acting occupies a prominent place in this system of religious education. Education is essentially a process of habit formation. Habit goes farther than precept. It is that on which, in all ages, the law-giver as well as the teacher has mainly placed his reliance. What the child's character, mental, moral, social, and spiritual, will be depends on the habits he forms in childhood and youth, for every experience, every impulse, every emotion, leaves a

record behind in the brain and the whole nervous system. Habit is the most powerful of all the educational forces we know of. In the plastic age of early childhood the child is to be trained for God and for a godly life by forming corresponding habits which become second nature to him in his maturity, and God owns and blesses this kind of nurture as that which is most in harmony with His laws. It is a sad mistake, which entails a fearful penalty, to let the child grow up in the ways of the carnal nature without any effort to train him in the way of righteousness, and then, when his character is set, expect the Divine Spirit to remake him, to convert him from his evil ways. Right habits have the same significance in the child's moral and spiritual life as they do in his physical life. The same psychological principles are involved in both cases. The entire educational machinery of our church is framed on this fundamental principle of human psychology. The Divine Spirit is most of all pleased to bestow His blessing upon those exercises and methods of instruction which proceed in harmony with the child's psychological nature and which make use of the ordinary faculties of the mind, so that no miraculous intervention is necessary for the individual's conversion. The Divine Spirit does His miraculous work when He receives the child into union with Christ in holy baptism;

the rest of the work He performs through the ordinary means of soul nurture.

There are several distinct stages in this work of Christian nurture. The first stage is that which takes place in the home in the early years of the child. This has already been referred to. The second stage is that of the school. It covers the period from about six years to twelve years of age. It may be divided into two sub-periods, that from six to eight years, called the *transition* stage, and that from eight to twelve years, and may be called the *formative* stage. When the child arrives at the school age the circumstances are somewhat changed, and different methods must be employed to suit the case. The instruction now assumes more of an official and formal character and also becomes more intensive. During the transition stage (six to eight years), the child's vital energy is mostly utilized in building up the tissues of the body, and consequently a smaller amount is left for mental exercises. The mental characteristics during this stage are such as passive form of attention, interest in process rather than product, almost exclusive attention to concrete things, and great activity of the senses. In the formative stage (eight to twelve years), the growth of the body is checked, hence there is more energy available for mental exertion. This period is characterized by great activity. It is distinctively the habit-forming period, that is, making permanent

pathways of nervous discharge. The child is capable of some degree of concentration and effort; the interest is still chiefly centered in objective and concrete things; there is a pronounced dislike for monotony, and the child is not inclined to stick to a task. It is exceedingly important for the teacher to know these peculiarities of child nature, for he must adapt his instruction to the needs of the case. And this holds true in religious training just as it does in secular teaching. In the work for this period the Sunday school and the parochial school come in for their share in the educative process. The Bible school is not a substitute, on the one hand, for home training, neither, on the other hand, can it take the place of the next higher stage, but it supplements the home training and prepares the way for the next stage.

The third stage is that of catechization and confirmation. This function is entirely distinct from that of the Bible school. If the Bible school is planned on right pedagogical principles and is carried on consistently with the school idea, it is a logical and most valuable preparation, a true propædæutic to the catechetical function. The child has now arrived at the age of adolescence. Adolescence is a kind of new birth. There is a great widening out of the youth's horizon. He lives in a new world. His higher mental and moral faculties are blossoming out into maturity. The intellectual changes

are profound. It is a period of great emotional excitability. The emotions of "fear, anger, love, pity, emulation, ambition, and sympathy are either now born or springing into their most intense life." There is a host of new instincts suddenly making their appearance. Impulse dominates the youth's activities. A reaction sets in against drill and repetition. Interests can be appealed to on a much higher plane. The youth is inclined to look into the future. This period is the breeding-ground of high ideals. There occurs a profound religious awakening, and the realities of the spiritual world acquire a greatly intensified appeal. A deeper sense of personal responsibility now comes into consciousness. The time has arrived when the youth must make a profession of religion, and must take upon himself the vows made for him in infant baptism.

At this stage the Church, in the person of the pastor, officially takes charge of directing the religious education of the young. A specific and still more intensive course of instruction in the doctrines of religion and of the Church is arranged, and for a period of a year or more the young are trained intensively under the immediate supervision of the pastor, the official head of the church, with constant reference to the learners' spiritual edification. When this course is satisfactorily completed, the members of the class are then formally admitted

to all the rights and privileges of church membership by the rite of confirmation. This completes the formal and educative stage of Christian nurture. The youth has now been inducted into the higher Christian life, and it is expected that he will go on growing in grace and in the experimental knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. His parents, his sponsors, his guardians, his teachers, his pastor, each in their own way, have done their respective parts to bring him into a right relation to his God and Saviour; what remains yet to be done is entirely a personal matter. If these means of Christian nurture fail to bring about their intended results, little else, humanly speaking, can be done for the incorrigible individual. If anything more is to be effected, it must be referred to the grace of God who may have ways of His own different from those through which He ordinarily operates. If a man cannot be made a Christian through the ordinary use of the Word and the Sacraments and the work of Christian nurture, we know of no other way of salvation.

Christian nurture is not only Biblical, it is also good pedagogy and good psychology. There is not a single principle of modern pedagogy which is not in complete accord with the teachings and practices of this system of religious education. The system is squarely founded on child nature. It recognizes

the various stages in the physiological and psychological development of the child, and it seeks to adapt its instruction to the needs of the child at every stage in the unfolding of his mental and moral powers. Its grand aim is to make all instruction serve the ends of a healthy progressive spiritual life. The one thing needful in all education is the wisdom of heaven, which glorifies the spiritual element. It insists upon rational grading according to the child's advancement, rather than his age or size. It correlates the studies pursued in each grade, on the one hand, with what has preceded, and on the other hand, with what is to follow. This completely covers the great law of apperception, and lays the foundation for a rational curriculum. It holds closely to the school idea, it aims to furnish the child a real religious education, it makes the teaching function fundamental. This is Biblical pedagogy, the best we know of. It trains the child in the way he should go. It starts with the child and continues until the character is fully formed. Its method is that of the greatest of all teachers, the Teacher come from God, to show men the laws of the kingdom of heaven. It brings to bear the strongest possible forces in religious education, namely, the native instincts of the soul, which are expressed in the psalmist's words, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." This system has stood the test

of the ages. It is as old as man himself, and yet is ever new in each individual case. It is God's way of bringing men into the kingdom of heaven and of converting the possibilities of the human soul into glorious actualities.

CHAPTER X.

THE CURRICULUM.

To a great extent the success of Bible school work depends on the curriculum of the school. If the course of studies is arranged on sound pedagogical principles and if the right kind of teacher has charge of the work, there is no good reason why the work should not be prosperous and happy. There are, of course, numerous factors entering into the problem, but the most important are the teacher and the curriculum. The arranging of a good course of studies is the most responsible and also the most difficult part in the practical working of a school. It matters little how well qualified, how consecrated, how efficient the teacher may be, or how complete the equipment, or how earnest the pupils, or how perfect the administration may be, if the course of studies is deficient, there will be to that extent a serious handicap in the work of the school. The making of the course of studies to be pursued in the various classes should be the work of an expert, one deeply grounded in the principles of psychology. Such a task requires sound learning, good judgment, thorough acquaintance

with the laws of pedagogy, and wide experience in educational affairs.

There are several qualities which every well made curriculum should possess. In the first place, it must be based on the law of apperception. The curriculum should be a series of subjects which lead up to a particular goal, and which are closely articulated one with another. Each new subject introduced should be logically connected with the last preceding subject, and should have special reference to the next one to follow. There must be no gaps, no breaks in the continuity of studies. The subject last pursued should be a preparation for the next to be taken up and a logical introduction to it. The subjects should be arranged in the order of a climax, the progress being from the lower to the higher, from the broader to the narrower, from the general to the more specific, from the concrete to the abstract. This is the order in which the powers of the child's mind develop. The parts of the curriculum should make a unity in the whole, the kind of unity exhibited in the growth of an organism, each part having a vital relation to the other parts. The subjects already gone over serve to explain the new ones next to be introduced. The knowledge so gained has the quality of being easily assimilated, and is conducive to mental growth.

Applying these principles to the arrangement of a course in Bible study, we are led to say that selec-

tions from the Old Testament should precede those from the New for boys and girls prior to the dawn of adolescence. If interest is the best index of capacity on the part of the learner, or of pedagogical ripeness, then this conclusion is inevitable. The concrete should precede the abstract. This is a principle of great importance in the education of children. The stories of the Old Testament appeal to the child's interest chiefly because they are concrete in their nature. In these stories there is much of the mysterious, the wonderful, the heroic, the spectacular, just the elements which are so fascinating to the child's fancy. The years immediately preceding the period of adolescence are characterized by a love for exciting events, for hero-worship, for the wonderful and by a strong sense of justice and of law. There is nowhere to be found better material for a collection of stories for children than the characters, events, facts, pictures, etc., of Old Testament history. We may name such as the story of creation, the story of the Garden of Eden, the story of Cain and Abel, the Flood, the story of Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Abraham, Jacob, Samuel, David, Solomon, Daniel; the story of the Israelites in Egypt, the Exodus, the wanderings of the people in the wilderness, the entrance into the promised land, the wars with the heathen tribes; the building of the temple, the tower of Babel, the story of Ruth and Naomi, the slaying of the giant Goliath, the

burning bush, the giving of the Ten Commandments at Sinai, the brazen serpent in the wilderness, and a hundred others—all splendid material for thrilling stories which carry moral lessons of the highest importance in religious education.

The New Testament is widely different both in contents and general spirit. It is adapted chiefly for adolescents and mature people. It is vastly more abstract, abounding in materials for thought and reflection. It is suitable for pupils farther advanced and of greater maturity. The Old Testament stands for the childhood stage of Christian civilization, while the New Testament stands for the adolescent and manhood stage. In the Old Testament the appeal is to the sense of wonder, of mystery, of heroism, of the naivete; in the New, the appeal is to doctrine, to thought, to reflection. Even though the Gospels are written in an exceedingly simple style, still the contents require mature thought, and therefore not so well adapted to young children. If interest in the gospel stories is forced too early, it may result in dwarfing the later conceptions and destroying the interest in subjects better fitted for later years. There is plenty of material in the New Testament for children's stories, but it must be selected with fine discrimination and with special reference to the particular stage of the child's development.

In arranging lessons for teaching the story of

Jesus the same principle should be followed. The concrete should come first. The earlier lessons should be occupied with the humanity of Jesus. The story of Bethlehem's manger, the story of His birth as that of any ordinary human child, the facts and incidents of His childhood and early manhood appeal to the interest of children. The supernatural elements in the Gospels should be kept in the background with young children. The young child cannot understand nor appreciate the divinity of Christ. The child mind thinks of the Christ child as a child like unto himself, one with whom he can talk and play. And this idea should not be disturbed by trying to make the young child understand that the Babe of Bethlehem was a supernatural babe. It is better not to deprive the child of his delightfully realistic conception of the child Jesus. The conception of Christ's divinity will come later on. A Saviour pictured to the child as a supernatural, divine being would have little contact with the child's sense of reality; He would not appeal to the child, because such a conception is beyond the child's sphere of thought. But when the Saviour is represented as a human being, with a true human birth, a human nature like our own, with a real human childhood, the child is attracted to Him. Later on the Saviour's divinity can be emphasized when the mind of the learner has attained sufficient maturity to appreciate this side of

His Divine-human character. From the pedagogical viewpoint the essential thing is that each particular fact about Jesus should be presented in the order of the child's unfolding personality, each thing in its proper place and time, according to the principle of apperception, so that the mind of the child will assimilate the truth taught and thus will receive the greatest benefit from it.

Curriculum making that is really rational and truly intelligent knows what it is doing at each step of the process; it has a sufficient reason for the order it adopts; every step is adapted to the condition and the needs of the child's mind. The order of studies must correspond with the successive stages of the learner's growth in knowledge, experience, and comprehension. If at any particular point a subject is introduced that is too elementary, there is loss of time and dissipation of energy; if, on the other hand, a new subject is too advanced and too difficult for the pupil's mastery, the continuity of ideas is broken and the interest is not sustained. If this principle is rightly understood and put into practice by him who arranges the course of studies, the work of the school will be prosperous and the learners will be happy in the pursuit of knowledge.

The current church-school program is often sadly imperfect. The lesson materials are often unattractive in form and unsuited in subject matter to the age groups for which they are intended. The

order of subjects is frequently altogether wrong and in many instances the continuity of subjects is broken. And yet with all these imperfections it is truly wonderful what results have been attained. It is estimated that at least 87 per cent of all additions to the Protestant churches of our country come out of the Sunday school. There must be something tremendously vital in religious education to enable it to function at all under so many handicaps. What might we not expect from our Bible schools if they were better organized and if their program were constructed on sound principles?

CHAPTER XI.

CONCERNING METHOD.

By method we mean some particular way of reaching an end. According to the etymology of the word, method is the way through a task, the way we take to reach a certain goal. "All method is a rational progress, a certain end," says one, "which we seek to realize." Method has to do with the form and manner of presenting the contents of the lesson. All methods of teaching and learning, to be of any value, must be based on psychology; that is, on the natural modes of the mind's activity. The teacher's way of working must agree with the mind's way of working. Not every way is equally good, for there is a right way and a wrong way. The right way is the best, and the right way is that which is determined by the nature and laws of mind. Every teacher will devise a way of his own by which he hopes to gain the best results, but his way must conform to psychological principles. The knowledge and use of method is an essential part of the teacher's training for his work. Some kind of method is necessary, is unavoidable. The teacher will of necessity adopt

some particular way of doing the work of the school room; the important thing is that he chooses the right way. Upon this depends, in large measure the success, the prosperity, the happiness of the school work. If his methods are wrong, everything goes wrong, there is friction in the machinery, there is needless waste of energy, and the results are disappointing.

Method in pedagogy is a rational plan or a series of steps to bring about certain results. "Method," says Kant, "is proceeding according to principles." And, we may add, these principles are psychological in their nature. There are those who argue that adhering to method in teaching tends to destroy individuality; but surely this is a misconception. If method is viewed in the light of the underlying principles of mental action, it does not minimize nor destroy the teacher's individuality, nor does it in any respect interfere with his originality; on the contrary, it develops individuality and initiative in that it prevents him from falling into ruts, which is always the result of narrowness and superficiality. An intelligent study of scientific principles widens one's mental outlook and fosters originality. The teacher who has no method is the man or woman of one idea and that idea is a superficial one. When the teacher gives thought and study to his mode of presenting the truth to his pupils, and himself feels the higher life into which his pupils are being born

under his touch, in the teaching process, he will want to inquire into those psychological principles by which the pupil unfolds his possibilities into actualities and by which his mental growth proceeds. When his mind becomes awake to such questions he inevitably will give himself to the study of method, and method, instead of being a handicap to him, will prove to be a powerful means for promoting his own mental and spiritual growth.

Methods of teaching will vary according to several circumstances. First, they will depend on the degree of development to which the pupils have attained, and on the modes of mental activity which prevail at any particular period. Hence, in a general way, methods will group themselves into elementary, secondary, and advanced, or in other words, those especially adapted to childhood, youth, and maturity. It is evident that the same method will not apply to each of these periods.

Again, the method to be employed will be modified by the purpose or the object for which the school exists. In the Bible school when the object is religious education, the same methods cannot be employed in all respects that are used in secular education. In the main they may be the same, that is, they may depend on the same psychological laws, but in detail they will materially differ. Training a soul for communion with God and for appreciation of spiritual things is not the same as teaching

a pupil geography, English grammar, or arithmetic. The content of instruction will necessarily modify the mode of presentation. Such specific modifications as the case may require any wide-awake teacher will readily make to suit the particular circumstances and conditions.

The method of presenting Bible truth will still farther be modified according to the personality and aptitudes of the pupil. The ideal of religious instruction is to deal with the pupil individually. In such a case the personality of the pupil is the determining factor, and the teacher will adapt his instruction to the personal traits, the type of mind, the radical disposition, the habits of the pupil. In every particular he will address himself to a person with a mind, a heart, a will of his own, and the channel through which his external appeal is to reach the inner being of the pupil will have to be adapted to the pupil's peculiar personal traits. When this is done the very best results are to be obtained. Note the way in which our Saviour presented two of the fundamental truths of the Gospel to two widely different persons, to Nicodemus and to the woman of Samaria at the well Sychar. We cannot think otherwise than that He proceeded differently in each case. And note further what widely different responses He obtained from the two individuals. His method was such that He touched the inner life of each so that, under His hand, the

deepest thoughts and longings of each revealed themselves. In our Bible schools conditions are not usually ideal. It is necessary, under existing circumstances, to group pupils in classes where the teacher cannot deal with them personally to any great extent. Where the classes are large, general methods will have to be employed, with more or less hit or miss results. Both for the reason here stated and to secure adequate grading the classes should be as small as possible.

Roughly speaking, we may distinguish between six leading methods of teaching, arranged in pairs, namely, the analytic and the synthetic, the inductive and the deductive, the concrete and the abstract. The analytic method begins with individuals or with wholes and proceeds to a study of the parts of which the wholes are composed. For example, we may study the 23rd Psalm by starting with the general notion of the whole psalm, namely, that of God's tender care of His people under the figure of a shepherd and his flock. Then we proceed verse by verse to consider the different aspects of relationship between the shepherd and his sheep. We name and explain each part, each particular idea, that enters into the picture as a whole. The shepherd supplies all the wants of the sheep, he leads them out into green pastures and beside the still waters, he leads them in safe paths, he protects them from danger, he is ever by their side, he af-

fords them comfort in times of distress, he provides fulness of joy, and as a result the sheep trust in him, hear his voice, and follow him. The analogy, then, is applied to God's people in their relation to the Heavenly Shepherd. This is dealing with the psalm analytically.

The *Synthetic Method* is the reverse of the *Analytic*. Here we start with the parts and we bring these together in their proper relation one to another so as to make a whole. We begin with particular facts and incidents and we weave these into a connected story. As an example of this method we may mention the story of Ruth and Naomi. We begin by pointing out how Ruth came into the family of Naomi, how she lost her first husband, how she journeyed with Naomi into the country of her mother-in-law, how she gleaned in the field of Boaz, how she became the wife of Boaz, and through this marriage became the ancestress of David and of Christ. These incidents and facts, in the hands of the teacher, are woven together, correlated, integrated, and formed into a beautiful story, even as the artist puts together various blocks of marble to make a mosaic picture. Each of these two methods has its own peculiar excellences. In many cases both can be used with happy results. It will vary the lesson exercise and add interest if the teacher can use sometimes the one and sometimes the other. His own judgment will dictate when the

one or the other is better suited to the occasion and the subject in hand.

The *inductive method* proceeds from individual facts to a general notion, from the known to the unknown or from the better known to the less known. It has some things in common with the synthetic method above described, but differs in other particulars. We begin with things which we know to be facts, these facts we compare one with another, noting resemblances and differences, and so arrive at a general conclusion. The very essence of induction is comparison of individual things for the purpose of discovering similarities and differences. We conclude that what holds true of a certain number of particulars will hold true of the whole group to which the particulars belong. The parable of the talents may serve as an illustration of the inductive method. First, some individual facts are stated. The man who has received five talents, by trading gained five more talents; likewise the man who had received two talents, gained two more; upon each of these men was bestowed the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant," with a corresponding reward. Then came the man who had received one talent. He had not used it aright, he neglected it, and so failed to gain an additional talent. Upon him was pronounced a sentence of condemnation, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, etc." From these several individual facts we draw the general

conclusion that the faithful use of our gifts, be they large or small, is rewarded by a blessing, and neglect of the same brings with it a curse. It rests on the belief that the laws of nature and of the Divine order of things are uniform. This method is extensively used in scientific investigations. It does not aim to establish absolute certainty, but only probability; however, there may be such a high degree of probability as to be equivalent to certainty. The greater the number of concurring facts, and the greater the number of resemblances that can be discovered, the greater will be the probability of the general conclusion.

The *deductive method* is the opposite of the *inductive*. In this we start with a general truth or what is admitted to be a general truth, and then apply that to the individual things that come under the whole class. We begin with generalizations, such as definitions, rules, laws, principles, and proceed to their application in particular cases. A well-known example is that of employing the axioms of mathematics in the solution of problems. A Biblical example is that of the Saviour's utterance, "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O, ye of little faith?...But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6. 28-34). Here

a general truth is assumed, namely, God's providential care of all His creatures. From this the argument proceeds to particular cases, whose truth is warranted by the general truth. If God takes care of the grass and the flowers and the birds, much more will He provide for those who bear His own image. The general truth is first pointed out in the case of the grass and the flowers, and then applied to man. The *inductive* method first illustrates by particular examples and then states the principle involved in the form of a general truth or law; the *deductive method* first states the principle and then illustrates it by individual cases. Both of these methods have their merits, and neither should be used to the exclusion of the other. The best method of Bible school teaching is neither the inductive nor the deductive, but a combination of both. Some Bible truths are better presented by induction, while others require deduction. Almost any truth in a given group of studies can be taught by both methods. Whatever the method employed, it should be remembered that the method is the letter of instruction while the personality of the teacher is the spirit; the one "killeth," while the other "maketh alive."

To the foregoing methods must be added the *concrete* and the *abstract*. The *concrete* seeks to present the truth as a living, tangible reality, an actual fact, something that can be seen or heard or

perceived by any one of the senses. Concrete teaching means teaching through the use of objects; the truth stands forth as an object with such and such qualities, the object and its qualities cohering in one unity. The *abstract* method consists in the use of language alone; it separates the qualities from the object and presents these apart from the object. As a rule, abstract teaching deals with generalizations, with thought, while concrete teaching deals with individual objects and facts. From its nature it is evident that the concrete method is better adapted to children and youth, while the abstract appeals to persons of mature mind. It is to be noted that the greatest teachers have almost universally preferred the concrete method. This is also the method which the Master, the Teacher come from God, almost exclusively used when He taught the people in mass. All His parables and the lessons drawn from His miracles are of this nature. The principles of the kingdom are set forth in the form of objects and facts that can be seen or heard, as for example, the parable of the Sower, the Prodigal Son, the Good Shepherd, etc. A truth that can be apprehended through any of the sense organs is much more easily understood and makes a much deeper impression than one which must be apprehended by thought process alone. Note the difference between the Law and the Gospel in respect to their pedagogical character. The Law is abstract;

the Gospel is concrete. The Law states principles in the form of language; the Gospel presents truths of life in objective, living forms which immediately appeal to the interest of the hearer or reader. The Law says, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not bear false witness," "Thou shalt not covet," etc.; the Gospel shows us the Babe in the Manger, the boy Jesus in the midst of the doctors, the Man of Nazareth going about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead; it shows us the Son of God and Son of Man agonizing in the garden, hanging on the cross, lying in the tomb, ascending into Heaven—all things that we can see and hear and perceive with our senses, concrete realities.

Finally, in regard to the matter of method it should be said that the teacher must not allow himself to become a slave to his method; method is a good servant, but a bad master. When rightly used, it is a most useful and powerful instrument in the hands of a wise teacher, but if it is allowed to subordinate or suppress the teacher's personality it is a vicious thing. The Bible school teacher in particular needs to study method, so as to secure the maximum of effectiveness in his teaching, and give his calling a rank and dignity that will challenge the respect of the most highly trained teacher in secular education. He must not allow his Sunday school teaching in any respect to fall below the

very best in day school work. Pedagogy cannot lay down any code of rules which are to be followed in all cases. It can name and explain the respective merits of the various methods known to the profession, but the teacher himself must decide what is best adapted to his own needs and the needs of his pupils in any particular case. What is good and helpful for one teacher is not necessarily so for every other one. The method to be employed must be the natural correlate of the teacher's personality. To imitate the method of some other successful teacher may spell failure for him; it would be like David putting on the armour of Saul to combat the giant Goliath. In nothing else is there more urgent need of good judgment and tact than in the choice of method on the part of the Bible school teacher.

A true Biblical pedagogy must be a living and a growing pedagogy. It is not to be confined within fixed formulæ, but will change its methods and rules so as to correspond to the changing conditions of human life. The religion of Jesus, the exposition of which is the function of the Bible school teacher, is a progressive religion, ever in the closest touch with changing forms of life, and the teacher who would be of the greatest helpfulness to his pupils must also be progressive in his way of teaching the sacred text. There is danger, on the one hand, in exploiting new methods to the extent of extreme radicalism, and, on the other hand, of fossilizing old

methods so as to lose all their vitality and usefulness. There is imminent peril both in untried forward adventure and also in stagnation. To avoid these errors and to map out the way of true progress to those whose business it is to spread abroad the teachings of the Bible, the Master has given an infallible test by which to judge of new theories. He told His disciples that the Spirit of truth would guide them into all the truth. 'He shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you.' By this rule we are to test every new theory. The one outstanding question is, "Does the theory declare the things of Christ to the learner?" If it does, it is safe and useful, if not, it should be avoided.

To the student of present-day movements it is evident that we are entering upon a new era of religious education. Great changes are coming about in the teaching methods and organization of our church schools. Religious education is being reorganized on a scientific basis. The new spirit that has come, in these latter days, into general education is making itself felt also in our Bible school. Religious education looks to the science of modern pedagogy for principles upon which to rear its structures, and in particular, with which to shape its methods. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that these principles be right, that they be in full accord with the pedagogy of Jesus, for the Great Teacher had quite distinct teaching methods.

The chief consideration is that the foundations be sound. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There is no room here for the mechanistic or so-called behavioristic psychology which denies the validity of human consciousness as a determining power in human conduct. Jesus never taught any such doctrine. We must be sure that our religious methodology is grounded on a true psychology. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Wherefore, look to the foundations on which our religious teaching methods are to be built. The author of these pages, in all seriousness and earnestness, raises the voice of warning against the agnostic and atheistic teachings which, in scores of recent textbooks, are being exploited under the title of the "New Psychology."

CHAPTER XII.

CATECHIZATION.

The catechetical method of religious instruction is widely known in the Christian church, and has had a remarkable history. In the leading protestant denominations it has been in use, in its modern form, for more than four hundred years, and among Lutherans all over the world is even yet almost universally practiced. In certain forms it may be said to be contemporaneous with the Church itself. The practical art of catechization originated together with the church, and as early as the fourth and fifth centuries it began to develop a scientific theory and to take systematic form. From the very beginning, instruction in the truths of Christianity, in more or less systematic fashion, was considered essential for admission into the church, and very early catechists appeared as officers of the church. But the system as we know it dates to Reformation times.

From the pedagogical point of view catechization as a method of imparting religious instruction, or as an education *organon*, has much to recommend it. It sets for itself a definite program and it aims to

accomplish a definite end. It seeks to build up in the mind of youth a connected and consistent body of divine truth, a comprehensive outline of the fundamental doctrines of the holy Scriptures and the way of personal salvation. Indoctrination is its first great objective. More specifically speaking, it is a process of edification whereby the young are made to grow into a knowledge of the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. And it strives to do this in an orderly, systematic way. The all-important function of the church, appointed by her divine Head, is to bring the children and youth into the kingdom and train them for citizenship in the kingdom. And the only means put into her hands for accomplishing this end is the volume of the Sacred Scriptures, the living, all-powerful Word of truth, sent down from above to be an infallible rule of faith and practice. It is the church's sacred capability to train her children just as she wants them to be trained. So far as human instrumentality goes, it is as easy to make good Christians of her children as to make agnostics and scoffers. If the Church does her duty to her baptized children and uses the prescribed means of grace to train them in the way of eternal life, she has the promise of God that the Word of the Lord shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that whereunto it was sent. If she trains her children in the way they should go, when they are old they will not

depart from that way. This is the first great object of Catechization.

But this is not all; there is something more than indoctrination. Catechization seeks to make its pupils disciples of Christ, to lead them, while they are still young, to the Saviour and to bring them in touch with His life. For this end the simple Word is the "principal means of grace." "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation." Catechetical instruction seeks to start into action in the mind and heart of the catechumen the living and organizing power of God, and it trusts to the Holy Ghost to do His wonder-working in His own time and way. It is the distinctive excellence of this method that it begins with the young, the children of the church, "before the evil days come or the years draw nigh when they shall say they have no pleasure in these things," before they are hardened in sin and set in the ways and thoughts of the world. Certainly this must commend itself to every thoughtful person. Is not this, indeed, obeying the Master's command, "Feed my lambs"? Is not this what He means by "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven"? And is not this what we promise when we consecrate our little ones in holy baptism? Do we not, in that sacred act, vow before God to bring them up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord"? By all analogies it would seem that this

must be none other than the appointed method of God to bring men into the kingdom of heaven.

There is another end contemplated by the system of catechization, and that is, membership in the church of Christ. It seeks not only to acquaint the the young with the teachings of the Bible and through a knowledge of the truth to lead them to the Saviour, but it seeks also to invest them with certain privileges and means of Christian nurture by which they may be able to sustain themselves in the new life and persevere in the purity of the faith, and at the same time to afford them a channel through which the energies of a renewed and sanctified nature may flow out upon the world to bless the race of mankind. To this end the catechumens are made members of the church. Catechization bears a direct relation to the church and is inseparably connected with confirmation which is a formal induction into the duties, privileges, and responsibilities of membership in the church. No other known method accomplishes this end so successfully and satisfies the needs of the church in so large a degree as that of catechization. Subject this system of Christian education to any test you please, and it will prove itself evangelical in its foundation, scientific in its method, rational in its processes, harmonious with the nature of the human mind, conservative in its practices, Christlike in its spirit and aims, and glorious in its results.

In the next place let us inquire into the practical working of this system of Christian training. First, it is entrusted into the hands of a responsible officer of the congregation. To the pastor, the authorized shepherd of the flock, this work is consigned. This responsible function cannot be delegated to any subordinate individual, for no one else understands the needs of the flock and sustains such intimate and tender relation to them as does the pastor. Besides, by virtue of his office he is invested with the highest jurisdiction and can speak with authority as no one else can. He is the ambassador of Christ, whose voice the people are to hear as though God did speak to them through him. In addition to this, no one else is so well qualified for this work as he is by virtue of his learning, his piety, his experience, and his devotion to the welfare of the people.

In the next place, this system of religious education begins with children. It makes religious education coördinate with secular education. In our system of secular education we begin with the child as soon as his mental development will enable him to participate in the learning process, and for many years, even to the age of maturity, continue the process of mental discipline. This is as it ought to be and as the nature and needs of the mind require. Precisely the same thing should be done in the matter of religious education. Practical religion is an

education and involves the same pedagogical processes as does secular education. The young must be trained to godliness and to a high standard of moral life just as they are trained to scholarship. The catechetical class is the upper class in the church's school for the religious training of her children and youth. And the catechetical system shows its adaptation to the end in view by the fact that it conforms its methods of instruction with the necessities of the human mind and heart. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The words "Train up," in the margin of our King James version, are rendered "catechise." Others render the words "initiate, instruct, lay down the first rudiments, dedicate," etc. In this utterance the wise man enjoins upon the church the duty of dedicating the children to God at the opening of their career, and then nursing, catechising, disciplining them as God's own children; and then He gives the divine promise that when they are old they will not depart from the way into which they were initiated. Modern pedagogy knows no better philosophy of religious and secular education.

A word should be said concerning the textbook to be used. It is the catechism. But, some one will say, Is not the Bible, in reality, the *only* authorized textbook for religious training? What need, then, of a catechism? It is not a substitute for the Bi-

ble; it is a compendium of the Bible. A catechism is "an elementary book containing a summary of principles, especially of religious doctrine, reduced to the form of questions and answers." Luther's smaller catechism has been called a "Lay Bible." Luther himself says, "We have prepared this little work with no other view than to adapt it to the instruction of the young and illiterate." Some years ago, writing in the *Sunday School Times*, Dr. Vincent said, "The wise, rich, and suggestive formulas of theological truth, the outgrowth of the scholarship and Christian experience of all the ages, every Christian man and woman ought to know something about. We speak disrespectfully sometimes of catechisms; but in the catechisms of the Modern Protestant churches there are definitions that have in a single sentence a whole volume of fundamental truth, and it is not wise to depreciate a definition which is the outgrowth of years of Christian experience, wide research, and profound Christian thought." Of Luther's smaller catechism Justus Jonas says, "It may be bought for six pence, but six thousand worlds would not pay for it." Dr. C. P. Krauth, in his *Conservative Reformation*, says, "So truly did the shorter catechism embody the simple Christian faith, as to become by the spontaneous acclamation of millions, a confession. It was a private writing, and yet, beyond all the confessions, the direct pulsation of the church's whole heart is

felt in it." And Dr. Schaff writes, "Luther's smaller catechism is truly a great little book, with as many thoughts as words, and every word telling, and sticking to the heart as well as to the memory. It bears the stamp of the religious genius of Luther, who was both its father and pupil. It exhibits his almost apostolic gift of expressing the deepest things in the plainest language for the common people. It is strong food for a man, and yet as simple as a child.... As it left far behind all former catechetical manuals, it has, in its own order of excellence and usefulness, never been surpassed."

The method of teaching also claims our attention. There are three principal methods of instruction recognized in pedagogical lore. One is the lecture system; a second is the textbook system; and a third is a combination of the two preceding. By the first, the pupils are not required to commit to memory and recite any lessons, only hear lectures or homilies on certain topics; by the second, they hear no lectures, only commit to memory certain prescribed formulas of truth and recite them to the teacher. The experience of many of the world's most successful teachers shows that neither of the foregoing methods, taken by itself, is entirely satisfactory. Something else is necessary to gain the best results. Recognizing the inherent value of each in itself and also the need of something further, they combine the two and of this combination make a

third distinct method. Every practical educator realizes the fact that children and youth must have specific tasks appointed them; they must have lessons assigned which they can see and read in black and white, and which they are required to learn and recite. Any one who knows only the rudiments of psychology can readily understand the reason for this. The memory is of primary importance among the mental powers and needs to be trained. Memorizing is the very first thing the child does in the process of its education. In memory training, one of the most valuable aids is the committing of definite questions and answers, followed by frequent repetition and persistent drill. In such exercises it is necessary to insist upon perfect accuracy in every detail, using the same form of words so as to produce a distinct image in the mind. This must be continued until the grooves, so to speak, in the mind are deep and nonresistant. If any deviations in phraseology are allowed it serves to create confusion and waste of mental energy. The pathways through which the nerve currents travel to find expression must have no side passages or deviations through which they may escape, for that would give rise to uncertainty and a faulty memory. In trying to impress a new truth upon the mind of the child, always the same thing in the same way will be found a golden rule.

Luther himself, in giving directions how to use

the catechism sets forth the great importance of adhering to one particular form of words in the statement and exposition of the several parts of the catechism, in order that the minds of the young may not be confused by needless changes of phraseology. He insists strenuously upon uniformity even in the smallest particulars. His instructions rest on sound psychological principles. For purposes of definiteness and accuracy of knowledge, for strengthening the memory, and for sharpening the perceptive powers, the method of questions and answers has superior advantages. At this stage of the learner's mental development the chief aim of instruction is to fix in his mind the teachings of the Bible in such a way that the memory will retain them for ready recall. The process here to be chiefly stressed is essentially one of habit formation. In forming habits of thought and expression no exceptions and no deviations of language must be allowed until the truths taught are so firmly fixed in the mind as to become "second nature." The first thing to be done is to train the pupil's memory, to furnish his mind with a large body of Bible facts, and to put him in possession of an adequate vocabulary of biblical language, and for this there is no better method than that of set questions and answers, always adhering strictly to uniformity of language and identity of contents. When this initial task has been accomplished, then and not until

then, may the learner be encouraged to cultivate originality of phraseology and independence of interpretation. Some presume to say that the teacher should state the question and then encourage the learner to frame his own answer. But surely this is an error: this would result in confusion and mental weakness; it is bad psychology and worse pedagogy.

There is another way to test the soundness and practicability of the catechetical system, and that is, by its results. "By the fruits ye shall know the tree." If you would know the true inwardness of a man's mind, look at the books which he has studied and upon which his mind has been nurtured. If the piety of Lutheranism is "simple, childlike and trustful," as Dr. Schaff conceives it, it is because such is the character of the book which Lutheran children and young people study. If her "strength and beauty lie in her profound theology and rich hymnology," it is because her theologians and hymn writers have been reared upon the "sincere milk of the Word," as administered to them in childhood and early youth through her method of catechetical instruction. Some years ago the Rev. Dr. Dorus Clarke delivered a most remarkable address before the Historico-Genealogical Society of New England on "Saying the Catechism Seventy-five years ago and its Historical Results." Of studying the catechism in Westhampton, Dr. Clarke says, "It

has done more to form the New England character than any book except the Bible. I desire in this presence to acknowledge my deep obligations to my parents...for their fidelity in requiring me, much against my will, to commit to memory the Assembly's Catechism and to say it six or seven years in succession in the old meeting house in Westhampton amid tremblings and agitations I can never cease to remember.... It was taught everywhere,—in the family, in the school, and in the church.... The entire town was saturated with its doctrines, and it is almost as much so at the present day."

And now notice some of the mental, moral, and social effects of this system of thorough religious training upon the people of that community. "It was continued," says Dr. Clarke, "through the lifetime of nearly two generations, and therefore long enough fairly to test its real influence upon human character and life,—long enough to determine, historically, what were its legitimate effects upon individuals and upon society.... The general result was, and still is, that sobriety, large intelligence, sound morality and unfeigned piety exist there to a wider extent than in any other community of equal size within the limits of my acquaintance.... *Nineteenth*s of the inhabitants are regular attendants on public worship. *Thirty-eight* of the young men have graduated from college, have entered the learned professions, and especially the Christian

ministry; and several of them have risen to positions of the highest usefulness and honor. I have nowhere found such profound reverence for the name of Jehovah, such unquestioning faith in the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, such devout and conscientious observance of the Sabbath, such habitual practice of family prayer, such respect for an oath in a court of justice, such serious determination to enter the kingdom of Heaven, and such deep conviction that it never can be reached except by repentance for sin and faith in a crucified Redeemer, as I have seen in that town. . . . And if this be true, this superior Christian tone of society must have an adequate cause. That cause is its more thorough indoctrination from its settlement down to the present day, in the great truths of the Bible, creating public sentiment, permeating domestic life, giving vigor to conscience, converting men to Christ, and impregnating society, through all its ramifications, with a profound sense of moral obligation. . . . In no other way can you account for the intelligence, the good sense, the energy, the heroism, the piety, the self-sacrifice and the success of the sons and daughters of Westhampton, in their diversified forms of usefulness all over the world, than the great truths of the catechism, wrought into the very texture of society there, and working out their legitimate results upon the intellects, the hearts, and the life of that community."

This is a wonderful testimony to the value of the catechetical system of religious education. And it has not outlived its usefulness. It is as full of life and vigor and promise of great results now as ever it was. It has been tried and proved adequate to the needs of the church. It is as well adapted to the needs of the church here in America and in the twentieth century as ever it was anywhere in the world. Experience teaches that nothing else answers the purpose of religious education quite so well as the old system of catechization. What it did for the people of Westhampton a hundred years ago it will do anywhere else to-day if practiced with the same thoroughness and persistency. The method will stand any test that modern pedagogy may see fit to apply, and it will always prove itself equal to the demands of any phase of religious education.



